



The Government
of Vanuatu

Vanuatu Loss and Damage Policy

with an Implementation Roadmap

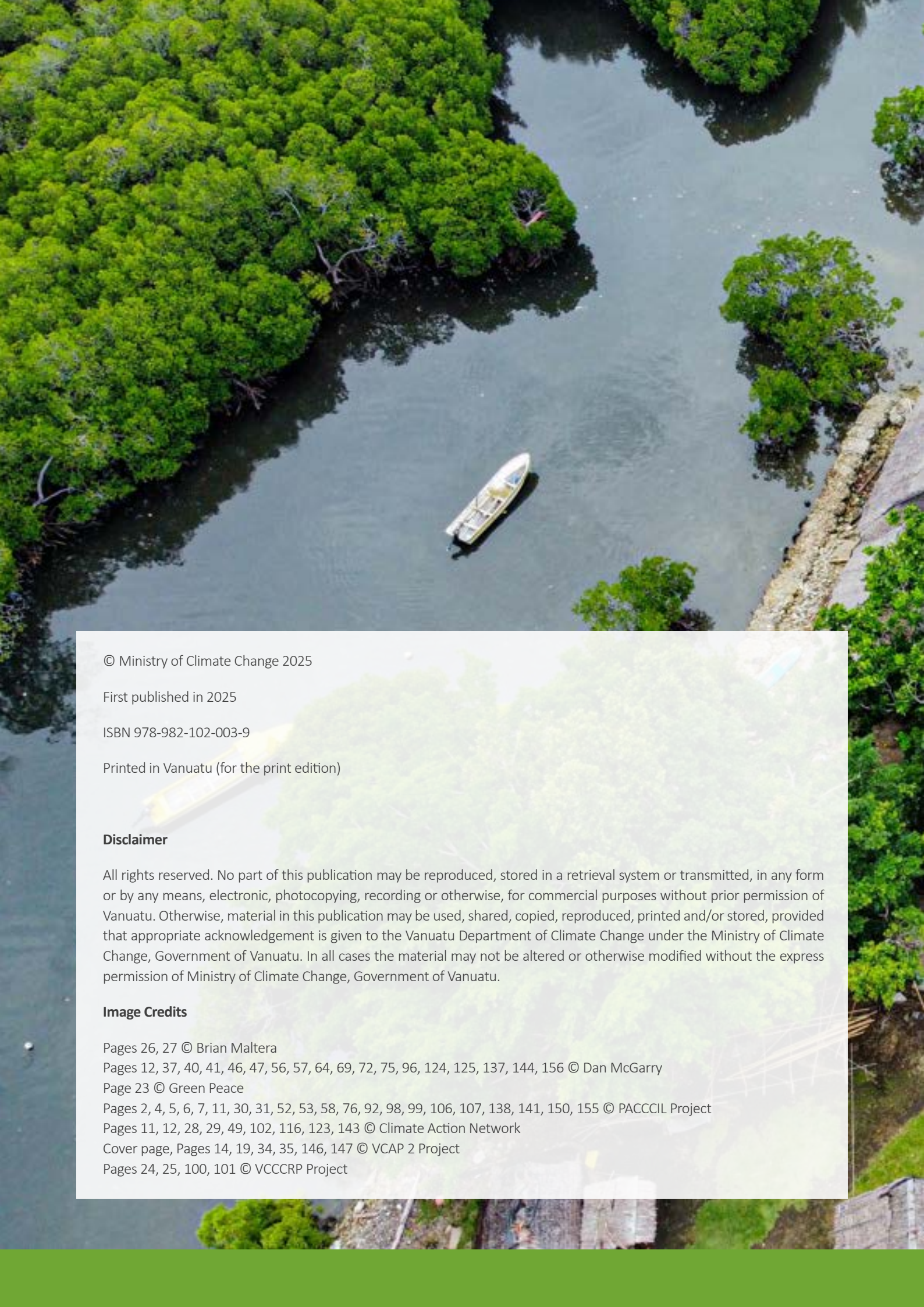


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Vanuatu Loss and Damage Policy

with an Implementation Roadmap





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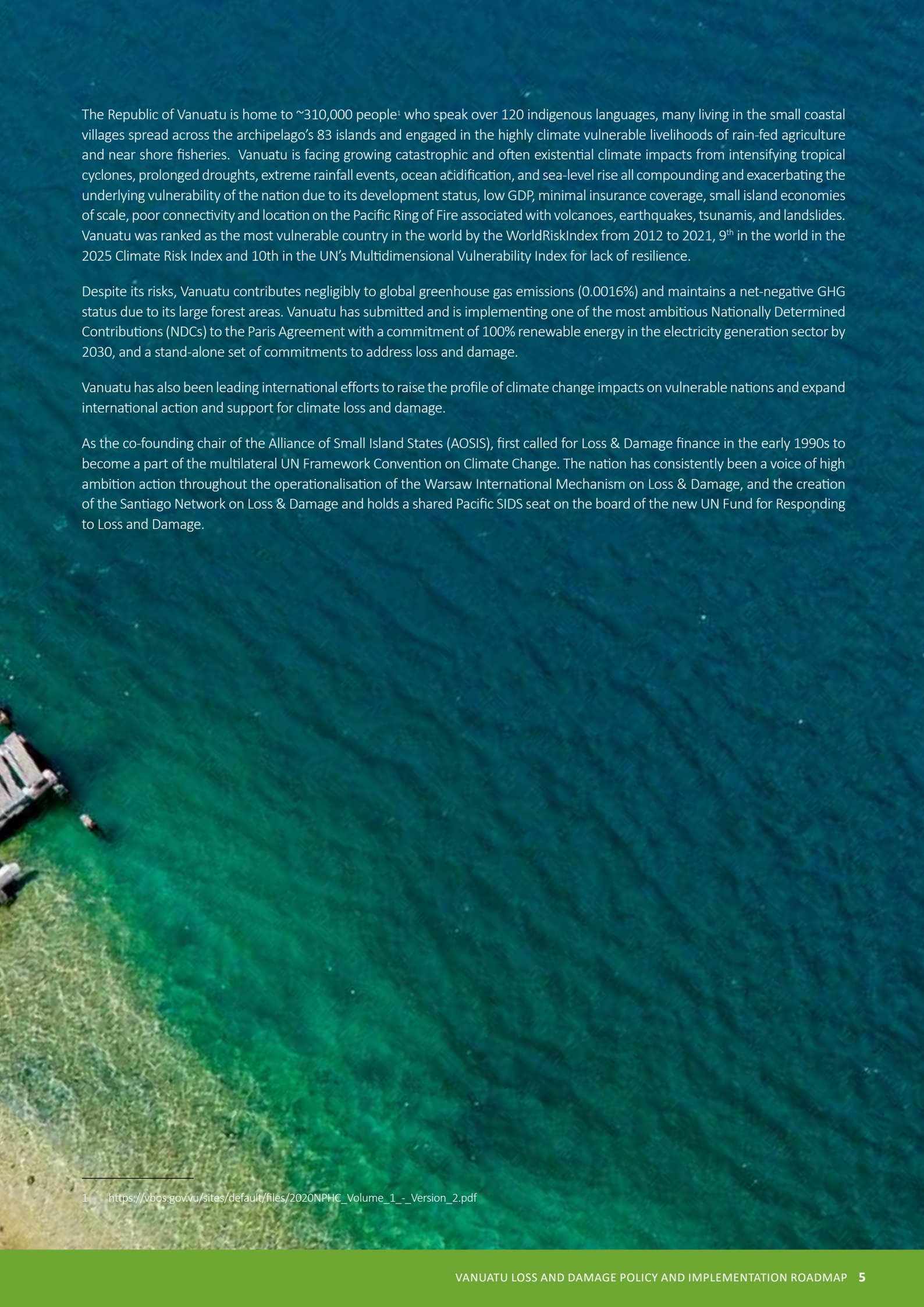
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An aerial photograph of a tropical coastline. The top half of the image shows deep turquoise ocean water. Below this is a shallow, sandy beach area with light green and yellowish water. A long, narrow wooden pier with a green metal railing extends from the bottom right towards the center of the image. The bottom left corner shows a sandy beach with some sparse vegetation and a few people walking.

01

OVERVIEW



The Republic of Vanuatu is home to ~310,000 people¹ who speak over 120 indigenous languages, many living in the small coastal villages spread across the archipelago's 83 islands and engaged in the highly climate vulnerable livelihoods of rain-fed agriculture and near shore fisheries. Vanuatu is facing growing catastrophic and often existential climate impacts from intensifying tropical cyclones, prolonged droughts, extreme rainfall events, ocean acidification, and sea-level rise all compounding and exacerbating the underlying vulnerability of the nation due to its development status, low GDP, minimal insurance coverage, small island economies of scale, poor connectivity and location on the Pacific Ring of Fire associated with volcanoes, earthquakes, tsunamis, and landslides. Vanuatu was ranked as the most vulnerable country in the world by the WorldRiskIndex from 2012 to 2021, 9th in the world in the 2025 Climate Risk Index and 10th in the UN's Multidimensional Vulnerability Index for lack of resilience.

Despite its risks, Vanuatu contributes negligibly to global greenhouse gas emissions (0.0016%) and maintains a net-negative GHG status due to its large forest areas. Vanuatu has submitted and is implementing one of the most ambitious Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement with a commitment of 100% renewable energy in the electricity generation sector by 2030, and a stand-alone set of commitments to address loss and damage.

Vanuatu has also been leading international efforts to raise the profile of climate change impacts on vulnerable nations and expand international action and support for climate loss and damage.

As the co-founding chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), first called for Loss & Damage finance in the early 1990s to become a part of the multilateral UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The nation has consistently been a voice of high ambition action throughout the operationalisation of the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss & Damage, and the creation of the Santiago Network on Loss & Damage and holds a shared Pacific SIDS seat on the board of the new UN Fund for Responding to Loss and Damage.

1 https://vbos.govvu/sites/default/files/2020NPHC_Volume_1_-_Version_2.pdf



Purpose and Scope of the National Loss and Damage Policy

While Vanuatu is a global leader in Loss & Damage policy and innovation, the nation has not yet had a standalone Loss & Damage Policy or a well articulated framework for addressing the wide ranging and worsening climate impacts affecting Vanuatu.

At the request of the Government of Vanuatu, the Global Green Growth Institute and the UK's Small Island Developing States Capacity and Resilience Programme (SIDAR) have supported Vanuatu's Ministry of Climate Change to develop this Loss and Damage Policy and Implementation Plan to provide a high-level and forward looking programme of action to guide Vanuatu's evolving loss and damage commitments and on-ground action.

One of the primary goals of the GGGI/SIDAR support to Vanuatu for the Loss & Damage Policy and Implementation Plan is to enhance the capacity and institutional national institutions to access and manage climate finance effectively, including new Loss & Damage finance from the Fund for responding to Loss & Damage and lead to increased absorptive capacity, allowing for the efficient delivery of impactful climate programs.

This Policy is based on extensive consultation and engagement with stakeholder from government, civil society, NGOs, the private sector, faith-based organizations, sub-national governments, traditional authorities, community leaders, academic organizations, regional technical agencies, and development partners at all levels. At their request, this Policy and the associated 2025/2026 Implementation Roadmap promotes inclusiveness and visibility, enhances coordination, and enables more efficient communication and strengthened partnerships to aid the implementation of a actions to address loss and damage.

Importantly, this Policy also provides a clear theoretical framework for understanding the linkages among climate GHG mitigation, adaptation, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action and long term recovery stakeholders and initiatives, and provides a clear definitional framing that improves understanding of a complex and crowded development space.



The Policy development has been stewarded by the NAB's Loss & Damage Informal Working Group, who have overseen the consultation and policy review process as well as provided critical guidance on loss and damage policy priorities.

The Loss & Damage Policy and Implementation Roadmap aim to enable Vanuatu to:

- Reform national governance structures to more effectively address loss and damage from a wide range of climate change impacts.
- Define clear roles, responsibilities, and coordination mechanisms among government and non-government partners from the grassroots, sub national, regional and international levels
- Strengthen data collection, analysis, and reporting systems to track both economic and non-economic loss and damage.
- Develop financing strategies that ensure direct access to timely and adequate resources, including international climate funding arrangements and domestic sources.
- Integrate traditional knowledge into loss and damage initiatives to ensure culturally relevant and locally appropriate solutions.
- Promote locally-led loss and damage action to ensure that those most affected are able to self-determine their future development and livelihood pathways
- Establish a long-term programmatic approach to addressing loss and damage, based on a country platform centered around a new Loss & Damage Fund
- Implement improved Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting, and Learning (MERL) systems to assess loss and damage programming effectiveness and improve future actions.
- Advocate for stronger regional and international cooperation to secure technical, financial, and diplomatic support for loss and damage responses
- Ground loss and damage action in Vanuatu on principles of climate justice and upholding fundamental human rights

It is anticipated that this Policy and Implementation Roadmap will be used to develop a comprehensive approach to addressing loss and damage that is fit for purpose and allows the nation of Vanuatu to thrive into an uncertain future.

Background Information

Vanuatu's Historical Engagement and Ambition to Address Loss and Damage

Vanuatu has been a leader in Loss & Damage issues from the very outset of the multilateral climate change processes. Vanuatu, as founding chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), put forward the concept of an International Insurance Pool² to compensate low-lying islands for the loss and damage associated with sea level rise. Due to extreme pushback from rich developed countries, this provision was not included in the United National Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) when it was adopted in 1992.

Since that time, Vanuatu has continued to lead on loss and damage in the UNFCCC with a focus on engaging with the Warsaw International Mechanism on Loss & Damage, designing and operationalising the Fund for responding to Loss & Damage, enhancing wider loss and damage funding arrangements, expanding international cooperation, and refining policy frameworks aligned with the Paris Agreement to address the economic and non-economic impacts of climate change including from sudden-onset events, like cyclones and floods, and slow-onset processes, such as sea level rise and ocean acidification.

Notably, when Vanuatu submitted its instrument of ratification to the Paris Agreement on 21 September 2016, in the context of Loss & Damage and in consideration of its views on the need for reparations and compensation, the ratification compendium declaration reads, in part:



“...the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu declares its understanding that ratification of the Paris Agreement shall in no way constitute a renunciation of any rights under any other laws, including international law, and the communication depositing the Republic's instrument of ratification shall include a declaration to this effect for international record.”

In May 2022 Vanuatu's Parliament unanimously endorsed a Declaration of Climate Emergency³, which contains critical Loss & Damage policy context, including which:

- h. Observes the irrevocable loss and damage to our economy, society and environment that has been caused by global heating of more than 1 degree Celsius, demonstrating that the Earth is already too hot for safety, as attested by intensifying extreme weather like cyclones, floods and droughts as well as slow onset events like ocean acidification and sea level rise.
- j. Observes that the adverse effects of climate change falls most heavily on those segments of the population that are already in vulnerable situations owing to factors such as geography, poverty, gender, age, indigenesness, sexual orientation, birth, people with special needs or other status.
- l. Recognizes that ambitious and transformative climate action is urgently required across all sectors, by all stakeholders and at all levels, to prevent catastrophic climate change impacts, losses and damages.
- q. Decides that the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu will work tirelessly towards building resilience and the restoration of an optimal safe global climate by
 - Responding to the climate emergency in ways that emphasize equity, self-determination, culture, tradition, democracy, and the protection of fundamental human rights.
 - Submitting a new and enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution which demonstrates global highest levels of ambition with targets on Vanuatu's sector priorities in adaptation and loss & damage.

² <http://unfccc.int/resource/docs/a/wg2crp08.pdf>

³ <https://www.vanuatuicj.com/emergency>

- Pursuing all suitable avenues under international and domestic law to prevent harm resulting from climate change, including protecting the rights of present and future generations, including, by seeking an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice on the obligations of States under international law to protect the rights of present and future generations against the adverse effects of climate change.
- Further engage the public, through civil society agencies and Networks, in climate-emergency and climate justice related deliberations.

In December 2022, Vanuatu joined with the Commission of Small Island States on Climate Change and International Law (COSIS) to make a Request to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS)⁴ on key legal questions directly related to climate-related loss and damage to our oceans, namely:

What are the specific obligations of State Parties to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to:

- a. to prevent, reduce and control pollution of the marine environment in relation to the deleterious effects that result or are likely to result from climate change, including through ocean warming and sea level rise, and ocean acidification, which are caused by anthropogenic greenhouse gas emissions into the atmosphere? and
- b. to protect and preserve the marine environment in relation to climate change impacts, including ocean warming and sea level rise, and ocean acidification?

In May of 2024, the Tribunal made its historic ruling which identified greenhouse gasses as a marine pollutant under the convention, and advises that States indeed do have specific legal obligations outside of the Paris Agreement and UNFCCC to prevent harm (loss and damage) to the oceans. This ruling sets the stage for specific litigation against States that do not take adequate and science-based measures to control ocean-polluting emissions.

Vanuatu led an historic initiative at the United Nations General Assembly in 2023 to request for an Advisory Opinion to the UN's International Court of Justice⁵ seeking clarity, under International Law on:

1. What are the obligations of States under international law to ensure the protection of the climate system and other parts of the environment from anthropogenic emissions of greenhouse gases for States and for present and future generations;
2. What are the legal consequences under these obligations for States where they, by their acts and omissions, have caused significant harm to the climate system and other parts of the environment, with respect to:
 - States, including, in particular, small island developing States, which due to their geographical circumstances and level of development, are injured or specially affected by or are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change?
 - Peoples and individuals of the present and future generations affected by the adverse effects of climate change?"

Vanuatu's climate diplomatic teams lobbied more than 133 nations to co-sponsor the Resolution at the UNGA⁶ that sent the question to the court. These ICJ proceedings are currently underway⁷ with States making and responding to others' submissions. An Advisory Opinion on this case is expected in 2025.

To prevent and disincentivise environmental loss and damage from climate change, in 2024 Vanuatu (along with Fiji and Samoa) proposed to the Assembly of States Parties to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (ICC) that ecocide be formally classified as an international crime⁸, defined as "unlawful or wanton acts committed with knowledge that there is a substantial likelihood of severe and either widespread or long-term damage to the environment being caused by those acts."

4 <https://www.itlos.org/en/main/cases/list-of-cases/request-for-an-advisory-opinion-submitted-by-the-commission-of-small-island-states-on-climate-change-and-international-law-request-for-advisory-opinion-submitted-to-the-tribunal/>

5 www.vanuatuicj.com

6 <https://documents.un.org/doc/undoc/ltd/n23/094/52/pdf/n2309452.pdf?token=MYe2stN3ptvJrPYEGB&fe=true>

7 <https://www.icj-cij.org/case/187>

8 <https://www.theguardian.com/law/article/2024/sep/09/pacific-islands-ecocide-crime-icc-proposal>

Vanuatu's Future Climate Risk Profile

According to the Climate Risk Index (CRI) of 2025⁹, Vanuatu's ranks 9th in the world due to the high percentage of its population affected by climate impacts, and the high percentage of GDP impacted by climate events. The World Risk Index 2024 report¹⁰, Vanuatu ranked 45 out of 193 countries for risk from extreme natural events and negative climate change impacts, including due to exposure and vulnerability. Extremely high exposure to both climate and geological hazards results in serious consequences to human and environmental security, and places immense pressure on the country's infrastructure, economy, and the livelihoods of its citizens.

Vanuatu's future climate risk is consistent with the most robust global scientific evidence that finds that unprecedented changes to the climate system are causing widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people.

The Summary for Policymakers of IPCC's 2023 Synthesis Report (AR6) concludes that:

“Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred. Human-caused climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. This has led to widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people (high confidence)”¹¹

In the Summary for Policymakers of IPCC's 2022 Working Group 2 Report (AR6), the IPCC concluded that climate change, driven by human activity, has caused widespread adverse, in some cases irreversible, impacts, loss and damage to nature and people. In the IPCC's words:

“Human-induced climate change, including more frequent and intense extreme events, has caused widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people, beyond natural climate variability. ... The rise in weather and climate extremes has led to some irreversible impacts as natural and human systems are pushed beyond their ability to adapt.”¹²

According to the 'NextGen' Projections: Current and Future Climate for Vanuatu by CSIRO and SPREP¹³, and the Van-KIRAP factsheet series¹⁴, Vanuatu is planning for the following climate-related changes assessed for low (RCP2.6 about 2oC), medium (RCP4.5) and high (RCP8.5 about 4oC) global emission pathways based on 36 CMIP5 climate models that simulate future global climate:

9 <https://www.germanwatch.org/sites/default/files/2025-02/Climate%20Risk%20Index%202025.pdf>

10 The WorldRiskIndex indicates the disaster risk from extreme natural events and negative climate change impacts for 193 countries in the world, and is calculated per country as the geometric mean of exposure and vulnerability (Susceptibility, Coping and Adaptation) <https://weltrisikobericht.de/worldriskreport>

11 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf

12 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf

13 <https://www.rccap.org/uploads/files/2c538622-72fe-4f3d-a927-7b3a7149e73f/Vanuatu%20Country%20Report%20Final.pdf>

14 <https://vanclimatefutures.gov.vu/dashboard/explainers>



Temperature

- By 2030, warming will be 1.2°C relative to 1850-1900, regardless of the emission pathway
- By 2050, the warming is 1.3°C (RCP2.6) to 1.9°C (RCP8.5), relative to 1850-1900
- By 2070, the warming is 1.3°C (RCP2.6) to 2.6°C (RCP8.5), relative to 1850-1900
- Relative to 1850-1900:
 - in a 1.5°C warmer world, Vanuatu warms by 1.0 to 1.5°C
 - in a 2°C warmer world, Vanuatu warms by 1.3 to 1.9°C
 - in a 3°C warmer world, Vanuatu warms by 2.1 to 2.7°C
 - in a 4°C warmer world, Vanuatu warms by 2.6 to 3.4°C
- Historically the typical number of marine heat waves (MHWs) is around 25 days per year (20-year average centred on 1995). Under the low greenhouse gas emissions scenario (SSP126), this is projected to increase to about 80–150 days per year by 2050. Under the high emissions scenario (SSP585) this increases to about 170–310 days per year by 2050, with many days in the 'Strong' and 'Severe' MHW categories



Rainfall

- Annual total rainfall shows large year-to-year variability, partly related to the El Niño Southern Oscillation, and weather station data show no significant trends since 1960 or 1850-1900
- In future, average annual rainfall shows little change, with large uncertainty
- By 2030, projected annual rainfall change is +1% (-9 to +13%) in all emission scenarios, relative to 1986-2005
- By 2070, the change is 0% (-9 to +10%) under low emissions (RCP2.6), and +2% (-16 to +15%) under high emissions (RCP8.5), relative to 1986-2005
- Relative to 1986-2005:
 - in a 2°C warmer world, Vanuatu annual rainfall changes by 0% (-12 to +11%)
 - in a 3°C warmer world, Vanuatu annual rainfall changes by +2% (-15 to +11%)
- Future drought events for Vanuatu will tend to be classified in the extreme drought category rather than the moderate or severe drought category, consistent with the projected increase in the frequency of extreme El Niño events



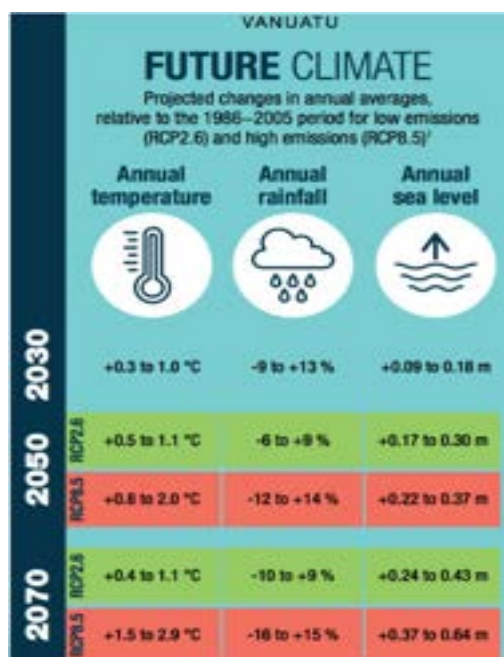
Sea Level Rise

- Sea level rise of 9-18 cm is projected by 2030 for all emission scenarios, relative to 1986-2005
- By 2050, sea level rise of 17-30 cm is projected for low emissions (RCP2.6) and 22-37 cm for high emissions (RCP8.5)
- By 2100, sea level rise of 33-64 cm is projected for low emissions (RCP2.6) and 68-122 cm for high emissions (RCP8.5)



Tropical Cyclones

- High confidence that cyclone frequency will decrease, although more cyclones are projected in future during El Niño conditions compared with present-climate El Niño conditions, with fewer cyclones in future during La Niña conditions compared with present-climate La Niña conditions (low-medium confidence).
- Under a high greenhouse gas emissions scenario (RCP8.5), the average number of cyclones passing within 500 km of Vanuatu is projected to decrease by ~12 % by the end of the 21st century (low-medium confidence)
- Average cyclone wind speed intensity is projected to increase slightly by the end of the century, and severe cyclone wind speed intensity (100-year return period) is projected to increase 2–6 % (medium confidence).
- Low confidence for changes in the frequency of severe (category 4-5) cyclones
- Medium to high confidence for an increase in cyclone rainfall rates
- Projected increase in average cyclone intensity, combined with sea level rise and increased rainfall rates, would increase cyclone impacts
- Sea level rise and an increase in extreme sea level events are projected, which may exacerbate cyclone impacts near the coast (medium-high confidence)
- There may be more extreme El Niños and more extreme La Niñas (medium confidence).
- Poleward movement of TCs is possible, but there is substantial uncertainty (low-medium confidence)



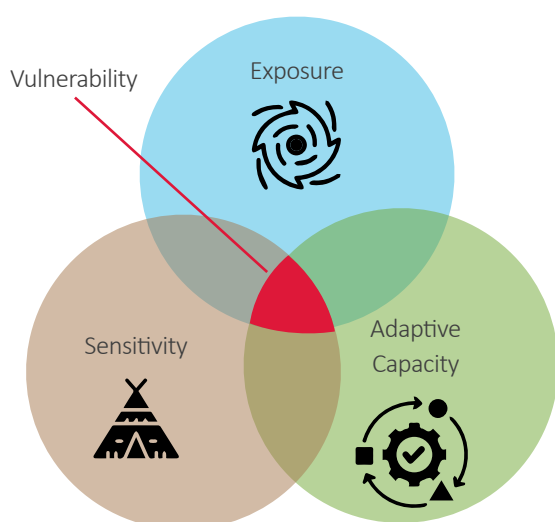
Additional Consequences

The Next Gen Digital Digest¹⁵ outlines additional consequences of climate change for Vanuatu:

- Sea level rise will cause coastal inundation, erosion and saltwater intrusion into aquifers
- Coastal communities are highly exposed because 64% of the population of 234,000 live within 1 km of the coast
- Infrastructure within 500 m of the coast accounts for 48% of the total asset number and 90% of the total infrastructure replacement value
- Severe coral bleaching may occur on an annual basis by 2043 under RCP8.5
- Maximum fisheries catch potential is projected to decline 25% by 2090 under RCP8.5
- Vanuatu's position within the South Pacific Convergence Zone (SPCZ) increases the risks associated with climate variability, particularly during El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) cycles.
- Additionally, due to its seismically active location, Vanuatu is prone to earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis.
- Coastal areas are particularly at risk due to sea level rise and tectonic subsidence, leading to extensive coastal erosion and frequent inundations on several islands.

Climate and Non-Climate Vulnerabilities

With the projected climate changes outlined above, Vanuatu's social and ecological systems have become even more vulnerable to the range of climate related hazards such as tropical cyclones, rising sea levels, droughts, floods, and ocean acidification.



Climate vulnerability is locally understood as the propensity or predisposition of the impacted/exposed system in question to be adversely affected. Vulnerability can be viewed as a function of exposure, sensitivity, and adaptive capacity; with the level of vulnerability a system or community has to a particular hazard is directly related to how much it is exposed to that hazard, how sensitive it is to the effects of that hazard, and how well it can adapt or cope with the potential impacts; essentially, the higher the exposure and sensitivity, and the lower the adaptive capacity, the greater the vulnerability will be. Vanuatu's climate vulnerabilities are often related to physical factors, such as infrastructure or building design, as well as intangible socio-economic factors, such as traditional knowledge, biodiversity status, social cohesion, poverty and access to health, education, or information.

Like other Small Island Developing State (SIDS), Vanuatu faces significant non-climate risks related to its geographic location, socio-economic conditions and development contexts which also influence its vulnerability to climate change:

¹⁵ https://www.rccap.org/uploads/files/aaa60215-85fd-4020-891c-64c40cb9f0e7/NextGen%20Digital%20Digest_Updated.pdf

- Limited Land & Natural Resources – Small land areas restrict agricultural production, freshwater availability, and space for sustainable development.
- High Dependency on Imports – Limited local value chains leads to heavy reliance on imported food, fuel, and goods, increasing costs and economic vulnerability.
- Small & Fragile Economies – Narrow economic base, heavily reliant on tourism, agriculture and remittances from regional labourers, make Vanuatu highly susceptible to external shocks.
- High Debt Burdens – Vanuatu struggles with unsustainable debt levels due to frequent disaster recovery costs and limited revenue sources.
- Challenges in Accessing Finance – Despite being highly vulnerable, Vanuatu faces difficulties securing climate finance, concessional loans, and development assistance due to its graduation from Least Developed Country status in 2020.
- Loss of Traditional Knowledge & Cultural Heritage – Climate change, globalization (including internet and social media) and migration contribute to the ongoing erosion of indigenous knowledge and cultural practices.
- Limited Human & Institutional Capacity – Small source populations and skill shortages hinder public service delivery, governance, and technical expertise for sustainable development.

Taken holistically, these risk factors make some key sectors particularly vulnerable to climate change including agriculture and fisheries, which are essential for food security and livelihoods for about 80% of the population and are highly sensitive to climate variations such as droughts and changing rainfall patterns. Climate change has also become one of the most severe drivers of biodiversity loss in sensitive ecosystems.

Climate loss and damage threatens indigenous traditional knowledge by disrupting ecosystems, altering ancestral lands, and undermining cultural practices that rely on specific environmental conditions, making it essential to address the loss of language, culture, customary practise and knowledge across solutions spaces. Indigenous people and communities have both rights and agency to address climate impacts in a self-determined way, including through the use of Traditional knowledge.



Compounding, Cascading and Intensifying Risk

As climate change intensifies, Vanuatu's multihazard riskscape is transforming. Climate risks compound and cascade to amplify the adverse impacts experienced by Vanuatu's small island communities, including further diminishing social and economic resilience. Multiple crises, including extreme natural events, political instability, health issues, and community conflicts are increasingly overlapping and amplifying each other. Global interconnected trends, including climate change, population growth, militarisation and armed conflict, the expansion of artificial intelligence and political polarization are exacerbating the localised effects, which counteract Vanuatu's development gains and progress towards social equity. The achievement of Vanuatu's National Sustainable Development Goals is at serious risk.

The impacts of these multiple crises are evident at every level: global, regional, national, provincial, island community and individual. Due to globalization and economic interdependencies, crises that begin beyond Vanuatu's borders have quickly impacted even the most remote island villages. Unstable governance, political turmoil, recurring extreme weather and slow onset climate events are mutually reinforcing, leading to increased vulnerability and higher risk levels. On an individual level, multiple crises are threatening livelihoods and severely impacting mental health, including of ni-Vanuatu children.

To effectively and proactively address these diverse impacts, Vanuatu aspires to multihazard planning, including employing new and innovative tools for analysing the complex risk profiles of multiple hazards and risks. While older approaches methods often focused on single triggers and struggled with the complexity of interconnected crises, Vanuatu's new risk strategies, including those address climate loss and damage, are becoming more holistic, coherent and complementary. Thus Vanuatu's Loss and Damage Policy seeks to enable multihazard considerations, across the spectrum of actions to avert (mitigate GHG emissions), minimize (through adaptation) and address (from a range of solutions) climate loss and damage. This Policy promotes a more comprehensive understanding of the interactions between different types of crises, their various levels of impact, and manifestations to strengthen the resilience of ni-Vanuatu island societies and promote sustainable development.

Addressing complex and multi-hazard challenges requires Vanuatu to engage in enhanced international cooperation, the sharing of knowledge and resources, and the development of flexible and adaptable solutions that encompass both immediate relief efforts and long-term prevention strategies, as well as the collaboration among all relevant stakeholders from government, civil society, the private sector (micro, small, medium and large), development partners, regional technical experts, scientists and humanitarian practitioners. Only through innovative and integrated approaches to address loss and damage can Vanuatu effectively tackle the challenges posed by multiple crises and address their devastating residual impacts.

A short sighted prioritisation of action and resources based on the on the climate-related events of today will leave Vanuatu in future position of intolerable risk. For this reason the Policy sets the direction to move beyond climatological hazard relief and response, towards the implementation of a broader spectrum of activities to address loss and damage, acknowledging the entire range of climatic stressors and non-climate risks.

Scenarios requiring multi-hazard approaches are becoming the norm in Vanuatu. For example, in 2023 Vanuatu suffered twin cyclones and an earthquake in just 48 hours¹⁶, demonstrating that seismic and climate risks are converging to augment loss and damage experienced locally. A 2022 analysis¹⁷ finds that as warming continues, countries like Vanuatu will be exposed to higher risk of tropical cyclones, both in terms of event intensification, as well as cascading multi-hazard scenarios.

Another example of cascading and compounding hazards was documented in the remote Western part of Vanuatu's largest island: Espiritu Santo in 2022, where extreme and prolonged rainfall interacted with a series of earthquakes to cause two catastrophic landslides and causing loss and damage to cultural sites and the full relocation of an indigenous community^{18, 19}.

Intersecting hazards have cascading and compounding impacts upon areas already suffering the adverse impacts of climate change, including both slow onset and extreme weather events. In another example, many of the low lying settlements in Port Vila, which were in the process of rebuilding after being washed out in the major La Nina flooding of May 2022²⁰, suffered a secondary wash out

16 <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-64832870>

17 <https://www.unescap.org/kp/2022/pathways-adaptation-and-resilience-pacific-sids-subregional-report>

18 <https://www.iied.org/21891iied>

19 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nWID37WOjHw>

20 https://media.greenpeace.org/C.aspx?VP3=SearchResult_VPage&STID=27MDHUFSCX2C

event during the March cyclones. Some of the areas hit were still recovering from the impacts of Cyclone Pam (a category 5 cyclone which had devastating economic and non-economic impact²¹), and many other areas were already facing the damaging impacts of rising sea levels and ocean acidification.

The full costs of these compounding impacts have never been fully calculated, as slow onset events rarely trigger humanitarian or insurance responses, with the burden typically shouldered entirely by island populations. For this reason, the government recently launched a Statistical development plan for Vanuatu disaster-related statistics 2024–2028 to coordinate, collate, produce, and disseminate quality and timely disaster-related statistical information for managing and reporting on the risk, occurrence, and impact of major disasters in Vanuatu.²²

Economic Effects of Climate Change Loss & Damage

More than a decade ago in 2011, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery GFDRR estimated that Vanuatu incurs an average of \$48 million per year in losses due to natural disasters like tropical cyclones, a figure that is equivalent to 6.6 percent of national GDP²³. More recent estimates²⁴ put annualized economic losses, which include losses from intensive and extensive risk, indirect losses and slow-onset disasters is approximately 166.96 million USD per year, which represents at least 21% of GDP. Pacific SIDS Average Annual Losses (AAL) per capita are at least three times higher than the average for South-East Asia, South and South-West Asia, and North and Central Asia.

Recent climate extreme events however are dwarfing these estimates, as single extreme events are now regularly costing more than 60% of Gross Domestic Product GDP, which in 2022 was 1.06 billion USD²⁵. Category 5 cyclone Pam, which hit the nation in 2015, caused an estimated US\$449.4 million of damages. The PDNA²⁶ suggests that US\$270.9 million was attributable to damage, and VUS\$178.5 million was attributable to loss. This is equivalent to 64.1% of Vanuatu's GDP, giving an indication of the scale of impact. Because of data limitations, however, it is likely that these figures underestimate the total impact. The sectors that sustained the highest level of damage were the housing sector, which accounts for 32% of the total damage costs, followed by the tourism sector (accounting for 20% of all damage), the education sector (accounting for 13% of all damage), and the transport sector (accounting for 10% of total damage). In contrast, the largest level of economic loss was to the agriculture and tourism sectors, estimated at 33% and 26% of the total losses respectively. In addition, the environmental sector suffered significant losses to ecosystem services, although these losses are not accounted within the impacts to GDP. The subsequent El Nino drought in 2016 continued to wreak havoc on the agricultural backbone of the economy, threatening the food security of the entire population.

Category 5 Cyclone Harold devastated Vanuatu in 2020, in the midst of the COVID19 crisis, completely overwhelming the capacity of locally based stakeholders to adequately respond. In the combined PDNA²⁷ for the two disasters, the compound nature of TC Harold and COVID-19 intensified the scale, and broadened the scope, of the human, social, economic and environmental impacts. International border restrictions had negative repercussions on the economic activity and hindered the humanitarian response. The Vanuatu TC Harold and COVID-19 Post Disaster Needs Assessment estimates that the monetary value of the disaster effects was US\$617 million, corresponding to approximately 61% of GDP in 2020.

In order to capture the true loss and damage from this catastrophic cyclone, including the non-economic losses to biodiversity and ecosystem services, the Vanuatu Government innovated through a non-economic valuation exercise²⁸. On ground surveys found that entire ecosystems and critical habitat were impacted by TC Harold, for example 100% of water systems on 4 islands increasing the incidence of water borne illness and loss of 90% of large trees that supply bats and birds with food and shelter. Quantification of ecosystem services loss and damage estimated environmental effects worth, in monetary terms, over US\$12 billion, which dwarfed the US\$617 million which was published in the final PDNA Report.

The twin Category 4 cyclones of 2023, TC Kevin and TC Judy, which hit Vanuatu within 48 hours of each other, affected more than

21 <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Cyclone-Pam>

22 <https://vbos.gov.vu/sites/default/files/NSDS%3B%20Disaster%20Related%20Statistics%202024-2028.pdf>

23 <https://www.gfdr.org/en/publication/country-risk-profile-vanuatu>

24 <https://www.unescap.org/sites/default/d8files/IDD-APDR-Subreport-Pacific-SIDS.pdf>

25 <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=VU>

26 https://dspac.gov.vu/images/docs/PDNA/PDNA_Cyclone_Pam.pdf

27 https://dspac.gov.vu/images/roc/pmo001-post-disaster-needs-assessment-volume-a_hr-single-pages__p41044.pdf

28 PDNA Environmental Cross Sectoral Report Final-1.pdf- Google Drive

80 percent of the population. The PDNA²⁹ found the total effects to be US\$433 million, in which Damage amounted to 68.9% or US\$298.6 million and Loss accounted for 31.1% or US\$134.5 million. As a result of the twin cyclones, Vanuatu's GDP growth forecast for 2023 was officially revised down from 3.6% to 3.0%. Importantly, the overall Government and Donor financing ran a fiscal deficit of US\$ 50.9 million, which was financed entirely by both domestic bonds and external loans, increasing Vanuatu's debt burden and resulting in shifts from finance from critical services like health and education to debt service.

Later in 2023, severe Cyclone Lola made landfall in Vanuatu's northern islands, affecting 46,000 households, representing over 180,000 people, with destructive winds, intense rainfall and flooding. An estimated 75 per cent of buildings and houses were destroyed in the impacted areas. The devastation and trauma caused by TC Lola has further compounded by the recent economic, social and environmental impacts of TC Judy & Kevin, TC Harold, high La Nina rainfall, the cyber-attack on Government servers and all on the back of the COVID-19 pandemic. Together, these events threatened the lives and livelihoods of all people across the archipelago, and undermined the achievement of the aspirations set in Vanuatu 2030 – The People's Plan, our National Sustainable Development Plan. In total, the total estimated recovery needs is just over US\$370 million, which represents ~52% of Vanuatu's GDP³⁰.

In addition to the dramatic losses and damages quantified after extreme events like cyclones as outlined above, there have been unquantified economic impacts from other events, including slow onset events including sea level rise, ocean acidification, sea surface temperature, atmospheric temperature and changes to seasonal rainfall, including as influenced by the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO).

During El Niño phases, Vanuatu experiences lower than normal rainfall, including often meteorological and agricultural drought, which has direct and often severe impacts on food security, water security, health and sanitation and ecosystem integrity. Similarly, La Niña phases bring unseasonal rainfall, as well as devastating flooding events which have regularly paralysed the international airport, closed essential services and businesses for days on end, destroyed local roads and other economic infrastructure.

- 2015–2016: A strong El Niño event occurred, significantly impacting agricultural outputs and threatening food security for most ni-Vanuatu families.
- 2017–2018: A weak La Niña developed, causing damage to roads, airstrips, and leading to landslides
- 2018–2019: A weak El Niño event was observed, leading to a prolonged drought across Vanuatu's southern islands.
- 2020–2021: A moderate La Niña event took place, leading to increased rainfall which caused rotting and spoilage of fresh produce and disease incidence in humans and livestock
- 2021–2022: A second consecutive La Niña event occurred, continuing to exacerbate the rain-induced loss and damage, including landslides which covered villages and prompted full relocation
- 2023–2024: A strong El Niño event developed, causing drought conditions across all islands, and leading to crop and livestock death, coral bleaching and closure of schools and clinics due to lack of water

Non-Economic Loss & Damage

While loss and damage can often be quantified in economic or monetary terms, much of the most significant harm suffered is intangible or to systems which play no part in the market economy. Such non-economic loss and damage (NELD) in Vanuatu encompasses the irreversible impacts of climate change that cannot be measured in financial terms, including loss of cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, biodiversity, human health, and community cohesion. These intangible losses deeply affect the identity, well-being, and resilience of communities, particularly indigenous and coastal populations who have strong cultural and spiritual ties to their environment.

Vanuatu has not yet been able to fully catalogue the non-economic losses and damages from climate change. For example financial analyses of the Post Disaster Needs Assessments highlighted above do not capture the intangible impacts of climate change on the people and ecosystems of Vanuatu, which profoundly, and often irreversibly, affect its communities and cultural heritage. Entire villages have been displaced, disrupting social networks and eroding the communal way of life that is central to Vanuatu's identity.

29 https://dsppac.gov.vu/images/roc/roc_23/pdna/tc-judy-and-tc-kevin-pdna.pdf

30 <https://nab.vu/sites/default/files/documents/TC%20Lola%20Recovery%20Plan.pdf>

The psychological toll of recurrent disasters has resulted in widespread trauma and a sense of helplessness, particularly among women and young people. Additionally, the degradation of ecosystems, such as coral reefs, tropical forests and mangroves, which are integral to the cultural, linguistic and spiritual practices of the Ni-Vanuatu people, further exacerbates the non-economic impacts. These losses are immeasurable in monetary terms but are deeply felt, highlighting the urgent need for comprehensive and culturally sensitive strategies to address and mitigate non-economic loss and damage in Vanuatu.

Recent studies in Vanuatu published in *Nature Climate Change*³¹ demonstrate that climate change is impinging on people's human rights. Climate impacts ranging from slow-onset changes, such as sea level rise, saltwater intrusion, longer dry periods and increasing temperatures, to extreme weather events, such as more intense cyclones, heavy downpours and flooding. The extent to which climate change impacts have affected everyday lives over the last year. When compared to key human rights declarations and covenants, participant observations of the climate effects on their lives demonstrated that fundamental human rights have already been undermined. The most severe impacts are on Ni-Vanuatu's rights to a healthy environment and ability to own, use, develop and control lands, followed closely by high impacts on rights to property and communal assets, standard of living, and family and social cohesion.

The impingements of climate change on ni-Vanuatu people's human rights are having cascading implications on numerous other interconnected human rights and can transcend across generations. Examples of such implications experienced in Vanuatu include climate-induced losses of traditional medicines that impact on ways of being, health, human life and well-being. Flooding of low-lying areas not only impacts infrastructure and precious cultural heritage such as gravesites but also causes salinization of freshwater tables that then impinge on potable water—another critical human need or right. Furthermore, increases in ocean temperatures and ocean acidification induces reef degradation, increased coral bleaching and outbreaks of crown-of-thorns starfish (all interconnected); these effects cascade into fishing resources being diminished and marine wildlife losses. This then presents challenges to ways of being, traditional and cultural food sources, and people's diet, negatively impacting human health.

One poignant example from the Vanuatu climate rights study is of cascading impacts caused by the destruction of the yam, a traditional root crop and staple food widely used in Vanuatu and elsewhere in the Pacific Islands region. One participant from Ambrym Island explained how yam is the 'main commodity of value for exchange' and that the 'rituals, rites, and customs of the yam... are the main social fabric that holds our kinship, tribe and communities, and society, together' (participant number 61). The deterioration and physical loss of the yam due to increased climate variability and extreme weather has impinged on human rights on multiple fronts, violating Vanuatu's social fabric, culture and traditions, agency, identities and food security:



“The yams are significant in our culture. Its harvest is marked by special cultural rituals and ceremonies, but the climate had affected the harvest sessions which resulted in a big delay in harvest and that makes people lose their normal cultural rhythm and ritual... The cultural ways of planting are not adaptive to these fast changes caused by the climate which is now leading to a loss of cultural practices and knowledge. This is a cultural right that can never be recovered and re-built if we lose it due to climate change. No financial means can recover those non-economic losses, which are our heritage and dignity. And climate change is taking these rights away from us.”

In total, the study found that at least nine fundamental human rights that are protected under a range of international laws and covenants have been undermined by climate loss and damage:

- Local environment (that is, land, sea, rivers, forests, biodiversity, and the ability of people to own, use, develop and control their lands) UNDRIP (Articles 2, 26.1 and 29.1)³²
- Property and communal assets (that is, individual property, such as homes and boats, and communal assets such as wells, bores, nakamals and schools) UDHR (Article 17)³³
- Standard of living (that is, access to food and water, education, reliable income and work, means of subsistence, social and health services, and physical and mental health) UDHR (Articles 23–26), ICCPR (Article 1.2)³⁴, ICESCR (Articles 1.2, 6.1, 11.1, 11.2, 12.1 and 13.1)³⁵ and UNDRIP (Articles 14.2, 21.1 and 24.2)

31 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-023-01831-0>

32 <https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/declaration-on-the-rights-of-indigenouspeoples.html>

33 <https://www.un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights>

34 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-civil-and-political-rights>

35 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/international-covenant-economic-social-and-cultural-rights>



- Family and social cohesion (that is, to have a family, as the natural and fundamental group unit of society, and the bonds and bridges that bind community life) UDHR (Article 16), ICCPR (Articles 23.1 and 23.2) and ICESCR (Article 10.1)
- Cultural life, traditions, customs and traditional knowledge (that is, spiritual and religious traditions, traditional medicines and the ability to pass these down through generations); UDHR (Article 27), ICESCR (Article 27) and UNDRIP (Articles 8.1, 11.1, 12.1, 13.1, 24.1 and 31.1)
- Freedom, peace and security (that is, to live as a distinct people and not be subjected to any act of violence or harm); UDHR (Article 3), ICCPR (Article 6.1) and UNDRIP (Articles 7.1 and 7.2)
- Self-determination and agency (that is, the ability of people to freely pursue economic, social, and cultural development, participate in decision-making, and freely make decisions about their life and the things that affect it); ICCPR (Article 1.1), ICESCR (Article 1.1) and UNDRIP (Articles 3, 20.1, 23 and 32.1)
- Identity (that is, the things that contribute to people being who they are and what they value in accordance with customs and traditions); UNDRIP (Article 33.1)
- Sense of place and ‘home’ (that is, any disruptions caused by displacement, relocation or migration); UDHR (Articles 13 and 15), ICCPR (Article 12.1) and UNDRIP (Articles 6, 9 and 10)

Non-Economic Loss and Damage often involves the erosion of indigenous language. Vanuatu has well over 100 indigenous languages³⁶, making it one of the world’s most linguistically diverse countries. Indigenous communities scattered throughout the nation have unique, and place-based cultures and languages that have thrived over time. However, due to the impacts of climate change, many areas in Vanuatu, both coastal and mountainous are becoming uninhabitable, forcing indigenous communities to move from ancestral lands permanently or temporarily.

One consequence is that different linguistic groups are being brought closer together in fewer habitable areas, which is resulting in a decline in the use of indigenous languages as indigenous communities adjust to their new surroundings³⁷. Words associated with particular geographical assets and place-based ecosystems are also being lost. As indigenous languages gradually disappear, so too does the cultural identity and sense of self of the community.

³⁶ <https://openresearch-repository.anu.edu.au/handle/1885/14819>

³⁷ <https://minorityrights.org/programmes/library/trends/trends2019/vanuatu/>

Impacts from Extreme and Slow Onset Events

Extreme climate events often garner the most international and domestic attention, due to their rapid onset nature and commonly severe impacts. In Vanuatu, these include:



Meteorological Extremes

- Tropical Cyclones
- Tornadoes and waterspouts
- Thunderstorms
- Hailstorms
- Lightning strikes
- Strong winds



Hydrological Extremes (Water-Related)

- Heavy rainfall / Cloudbursts
- River flooding
- Flash floods
- Coastal flooding
- Storm surges
- Droughts



Temperature Extremes

- Heatwaves
- Cold waves
- Sudden stratospheric warming events



Oceanic Extremes

- Marine heatwaves
- Coral bleaching events



Fire-Related Extremes

- Wildfires / Bushfires

Vanuatu also faces significant loss and damage from slow onset events, which include:



Temperature-Related Slow Onset Events

- Global heating and warming
- Rising land and ocean temperatures



Sea-Level and Ocean Changes

- Sea-level rise
- Coastal erosion
- Saltwater intrusion into freshwater sources
- Ocean acidification
- Changes in ocean currents



Water and Hydrological Changes

- Changes in precipitation patterns
- Increased aridity
- Desertification
- Groundwater depletion

These gradual but persistent changes are eroding coastlines, leading to the displacement of communities and the loss of arable land essential for food security. Unlike very visible, and news-generating hazards like tropical cyclones, these slow onset hazards happen almost imperceptibly yet have equally devastating consequences. These slow onset events have cumulative and compounding effects, steadily eroding the resilience of Vanuatu's ecosystems and communities.

For example, as sea levels rise, saltwater intrusion into freshwater resources compromises drinking water and agricultural productivity, undermining livelihoods and exacerbating food and water insecurity. Ocean acidification is damaging coral reefs, which are crucial for biodiversity, fisheries, and the tourism industry, thus threatening both the natural environment and economic stability. Prolonged droughts disrupt traditional farming practices, reduce crop yields, and increase the dependency on imported food, further straining local economies.

Vanuatu is now holistically considering the very real non-economic impacts which are exacerbating other climate and non climate threats facing an already vulnerable population.

Limits to Adaptation

Vanuatu has been investing heavily in climate adaptation to minimise climate risks and reduce vulnerable for more than 3 decades. Numerous national projects and programmes have adaptation at their core, for example the SPC-GIZ Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Islands Region (CCCP-IR)³⁸ project that ran from 2010-2018 in Vanuatu and was a pioneer in piloting diverse adaptation strategies in sectors like livestock with climate tolerant pig breeding, in fisheries management with coral reef mariculture³⁹ and backyard tilapia production⁴⁰, in agriculture with solar crop drying⁴¹ and climate smart agricultural practices. Newer programs such as the GCF-funded Climate Information Services for Resilient Development Planning in Vanuatu (Van-KIRAP)⁴² from 2016-2024 and the GEF-funded Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu – Phase II (VCAP II) project⁴³ from 2022-2028, are building on these early successes and expanding adaptation opportunities to communities nationwide.

Adaptation, to date, has been the most important climate priority for Vanuatu as it seeks to minimise loss and damage that ni-Vanuatu people suffer. Most policies and strategies of government line agencies include priorities for adaptation, and adaptation features prominently in the National Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2nd Edition⁴⁴ as well as forms the bulk of Vanuatu's Revised and Enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution to the UNFCCC⁴⁵.

However, experience demonstrates that that ni-Vanuatu people commonly continue to suffer even after all feasible adaptation efforts have been exhausted, or where adaptation options exist, but a community doesn't have the resources or enabling conditions to access or utilize them. More and more frequently residual impacts from climate change remain despite huge investments in adaptation from government, local communities and donor partners alike. These residual impacts refer to the unavoidable losses and damages that persist even after adaptation measures have been implemented, such as permanent loss of land due to sea-level rise, irreversible biodiversity loss, and disruptions to cultural heritage and traditional livelihoods.

For example, most communities in Vanuatu are investing time and resources into techniques and approaches that will help protect their crops and water supplies from climate change. These adaptation techniques are aimed at minimising the effects they feel, and the situation from spiraling out of control to one they cannot cope with themselves. But even if a community does everything it can to make its agricultural systems more resilient, empirical evidence confirms that a category 5 cyclone can uproot crops from the soil and demolish even the best implemented adaptation solutions. The loss and damage has been so severe in some instances that ni-Vanuatu farmers must re-start their agricultural activities from square one, or even shift into other livelihoods altogether. There is a clear demonstration across all sectors that the limits to adaptation have been, and continue to be, breached.

Vanuatu has found that there is a point with the increasing severity and frequency of climate changes at which adaptation options are limited, become ineffective or fail outright. Limits to adaptation are being experienced in all sectors and at all levels in Vanuatu.

38 <https://www.giz.de/en/worldwide/14200.html>

39 <https://panorama.solutions/en/solution/coral-gardening-climate-change-adaptation-vanuatu>

40 https://fame-archive.spc.int/doc/meetings/2013_Vanuatu_Climate_Workshop/Vanuatu_Climate_Workshop_2013_Report.pdf

41 <https://unfccc.int/climate-action/momentum-for-change/activity-database/momentum-for-change-vanuatu-women-lead-on-climate-adaptation-innovation-in-solar-fruit-drying>

42 <https://www.greenclimate.fund/project/fp035>

43 <https://www.thegef.org/projects-operations/projects/10415>

44 <https://www.nab.vu/document/vanuatu-national-ccdr-policy-2022-2030-2nd-edition>

45 <https://unfccc.int/documents/578782>

Gender Equality, Disability, and Social Inclusion (GEDSI)

Vanuatu's women and girls rely significantly on the coral, sea grass, and mangrove ecosystems for their livelihoods, spiritual, customary, and social protection purposes⁴⁶. Due to traditional gender roles dictated division of labour, while both men and women engage in daily farming activities for income source, women are primarily responsible for selling produce in village and urban markets. They are widely regarded as the “mamas of the market” and make up the majority of market vendors in Vanuatu underscoring their high reliance on these ecosystems to support their subsistence and livelihoods⁴⁷. For instance, in 2011, heavy rains ruined Vanuatu's mango crop, reducing the income of Vanuatu women who sold fruits at the local markets⁴⁸.

Women's vulnerability is further exacerbated by existing gender inequalities and social norms that marginalize women's voices and leadership. This, in turn, undermines their ability to fully participate and benefit from loss and damage response efforts, violating their human rights. As these ecosystems are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, women and girls are disproportionately affected by climate-related disasters. The loss of coral, sea grass and mangrove ecosystems (and associated loss of family income) is having a disproportionately negative impact on ni-Vanuatu girls coming from poor families as school fees are commonly paid only for eldest sons where household finances are limited. School fees are often the biggest barrier identified that is stopping girls from accessing and completing secondary education.

Other particularly vulnerable groups, including people with living with a disability, children and youth, the elderly and LGBTQ+ individuals face particular challenges and unique needs, as well as being important agents of change and action to address loss and damage.

Planning for disaster risk reduction and climate change resilience must include persons with disabilities at the national, provincial and community levels. Evidence from Vanuatu indicates that persons with disabilities experience greater risk in a disaster. They are less likely to evacuate safely and without injury due to a lack of accessible information regarding evacuation processes, and limited availability of accessible evacuation shelters. Persons with disabilities are not always included adequately in community or national disaster risk reduction planning and response processes or structures such as Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees, and Clusters.

Children and future generations are bearing, and will continue to bear, the brunt of the impact on a polluted, degraded planet. Climate change and its effects on ni-Vanuatu youth is fast becoming a critical issue. Some of the leading killers of children worldwide are highly sensitive to climate change. Higher temperatures have been linked to increased rates of malnutrition, cholera, diarrhoeal disease and vector-borne diseases like dengue and malaria. Children's underdeveloped immune systems put them at far greater risk of contracting these diseases and succumbing to their complications. Additionally, the loss of a parent or home due to a climate change-induced natural disaster certainly changes a child's world but it also can jeopardise their development.

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual and ally (LGBTQIA+) community is one such group, which, because of its social vulnerability, is a hidden victim of climate loss and damage to a wide extent. LGBTQIA+ individuals are uniquely vulnerable to exclusion, violence and exploitation because of the cumulative impacts of social stigma, discrimination and hatred. The social stigma around the LGBTQIA+ community also makes loss and damage relates support, social opportunities and infrastructure unavailable to them. The roots of loss and damage inequality are tied into the roots of multiple oppressions.

46 https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/15072/2/02_Chapters_1-6.pdf

47 <https://actionaid.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Monash-GRACC-Report-Vanuatu.pdf>

48 Vanuatu Women Lead on Climate Adaptation Innovation in Solar Fruit Drying – Vanuatu | UNFCCC





02

LOSS AND DAMAGE IN EXISTING VANUATU POLICY AND GOVERNANCE





The Meteorology, Geological Hazards and Climate Change Act No. 25 of 2016

The Meteorology, Geological Hazards and Climate Change Act No. 25 of 2016⁴⁹, establishes the National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction (NAB) to serve as the supreme governance and policy making body for all climate change and disaster risk reduction (CCDRR) programs, projects, initiatives. The overall aim of this multi-sectoral governance mechanism is to integrate the governance of CCDRR in a holistic way to reduce duplication and strengthen strategic oversight.



NAB and its Informal Working Groups

The NAB is comprised of director-level officials from across government machinery, including the director responsible for subnational and area governments in all provinces. The NAB also includes representatives from civil society and the private sector. To facilitate its work, the NAB has established a Technical Working Group on Adaptation and Loss & Damage, which in turn is operationalised through an active **Informal Working Group on Loss & Damage**. All policies, projects, programmes and initiatives related to Loss & Damage, including UNFCCC and Paris Agreement related positions, are developed under the oversight of this loss and damage group. Decisions are then formally endorsed by the NAB. The Loss & Damage Group is diverse in its membership, and includes representatives from Government, Civil Society, the Private Sector, Academic Organisations, and International organisations. As a guiding principle, the Loss & Damage group attempts to take a bottom-up locally-led and inclusive approach as a foundation to its work.



Disaster Risk Management Act No 23 of 2019

The Disaster Risk Management Act No 23 of 2019⁵⁰ regulates the management of disasters and for related purposes, including establishing the National Disaster Committee, which is comprised of 9 senior officials from key government departments, the police and the Red Cross, and is tasked with advising the responsible Minister on all matters relating to disasters and overseeing the implementation disaster policies and strategies. The Act also defines the role of the President in declaring a State of Emergency upon the advice of the Council of Ministers.



CCDRR Policy Implementation Plan

The **CCDRR Policy Implementation Plan** highlights the external financial and technical assistance need to “analyse best practices and recommend loss and damage frameworks for priority sectors,” and includes several Thematic Programs relevant to Loss & Damage:

Thematic Program 1: Improving Governance for Climate Change and Disaster Resilience

- Incorporate loss and damage calculation methodology into land and relocation policies and laws, and establish loss and damage registry to track overall damages and to inform Vanuatu’s international stance on loss and damage; 1.1.2
- Develop white paper analysis recommending an advocacy framework for Vanuatu on the Warsaw International Mechanisms for Loss and Damage; 1.2.5
- Review and update the National Disaster Act of 2006 and enact new legislation as appropriate; 1.3.1

Thematic Program 2: Improving Planning and Implementation for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction at Subnational Levels

- Develop and disseminate standard operating procedures (e.g., standard manual for emergency water supply at the provincial and community level to enhance disaster preparedness; 2.1.5
- Develop guidelines and user-friendly tools for provincial, municipal and local levels to guide preparedness procedures, emergency drills, and relief distribution; 2.4.3

Thematic Program 4: Increasing Financial Support and Management in Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction, with an objective to “Establish enabling conditions and pilot innovative programs for insurance, risk sharing, and calculation of loss and damage”

- Design and implement a mechanism for inventorying and quantifying loss and damage due to climate change impacts based on emerging best practice and in alignment with guidance from the Warsaw Implementation Mechanism for Loss and Damage; incorporate summary analysis of L&D into UNFCCC communications, COP negotiating strategies and updates, and LDC group discussions; 4.4.2
- Conduct a review of insurance/risk sharing case studies and best practices including public and private sector models, and develop briefing materials for decision makers; 4.4.3
- Conduct feasibility study and market analysis for selected mechanisms, including public and private sector options; 4.4.4
- Design and seek partners for pilot program for insurance/ risk sharing; 4.4.5

Thematic Program 7: Assessing and Reducing Vulnerability at all levels

- Develop a standardized methodology and guidelines for conducting community-level multi-hazard risk and vulnerability assessments; 7.1.1
- Adapt existing National Vulnerability Assessment framework to be applied for sectoral vulnerability and risk assessments. Define common hazards and threats (slow and sudden onset) to be assessed; 7.1.3
- Conduct analysis of emerging best practices and deliver white paper with recommendations for establishing sectoral loss and damage frameworks, including costing methodologies; 7.2.4

Thematic Program 8: Enhancing the Role and Competencies of Non-Government Stakeholders for a Whole-of-Society Response to Climate Change and Disasters.

- Implement business continuity training (BCT) with VCCI including training of trainers (ToT) program for local facilitators and semi-annual BCT workshops for private sector stakeholders; 8.2.2
- Conduct scoping study and publish white paper with suggested models and regulatory requirements to support CCDRR insurance or other risk sharing mechanism; 8.2.6

Thematic Program 9: Strengthening Disaster Preparedness, Response, and Recovery, which has four primary objectives, all related to loss and damage:

- Improve the national early warning system, including technical, operational, coordination, and human capacity aspects; 9.1.1-9.1.5
- Enhance disaster preparedness and improve prepositioning supplies and logistics to cover all areas of Vanuatu; 9.2.1 – 9.2.6
- Government and communities have enhanced capacity to develop and maintain safe, dignified evacuation options in emergencies; 9.3.1-9.3.8
- National and local authorities utilize accurate data to plan for, respond to, and recover from displacement. 9.4.1-9.4.7



CCDRR Policy Implementation Plan

Vanuatu's updated Climate & Disaster Risk Reduction Policy⁵¹

includes section 7.4.4 on Loss & Damage, with the objective to establish mechanisms to assess and redress loss and damage incurred as a result of climate change. The policy acknowledges that dialogue has been undertaken on a broader concept of risk reduction, sharing and transfer, insurance and rehabilitation, through international platforms such as the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage, and outlines seven key action areas:

- Strongly advocating internationally and domestically to operationalise and implement action under the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage.
- Developing a loss and damage implementation framework, including risk sharing, insurance and compensation approaches at replacement value.
- Conducting assessments on potential and actual loss and damage across the country linked with ongoing vulnerability assessment processes.
- Determining priority Vanuatu sectoral issues and quantifying losses (e.g., food security, culture, ecosystem services and integrity).
- Mainstreaming loss and damage into land and relocation policies and laws.
- Providing clarity on enforcement of and the mandate for climate proofing development among government line agencies.
- Ensuring that the design and construction of public and other major infrastructure and development projects consider current and projected risks in order to minimize loss and damage, especially by developing and adhering to climate-proofed building codes, environmental impact assessments, regulations and development guidelines.

⁵¹ <https://www.nab.vu/document/vanuatu-national-ccdr-policy-2022-2030-2nd-edition>



Vanuatu's National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement

The preamble of **Vanuatu's National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement** begins with "Sudden and slow-onset disasters are increasing features of Ni-Vanuatu life. Disasters can have devastating effects on the livelihoods, physical security and well-being of communities and threaten the survival of socio-cultural systems." The policy itself includes numerous policy priorities around displacement, relocation and migration across various sectors and with a range of stakeholders.



National Adaptive Social Protection Policy

In 2024, Vanuatu adopted a **National Adaptive Social Protection Policy**, with actions and indicators related to addressing climate loss and damage, including contributing to reducing vulnerability to environmental shocks by integrating early warning systems with adaptive social protection programs supporting the people of Vanuatu, with particular focus to those most vulnerable, and promoting government-led investments in the resilience capacities of households who are particularly vulnerable to shocks through social protection programs including cash transfers. The policy prioritises programs that build community resilience to prepare, cope and adapt to disasters and shocks through disaster preparedness and recovery, protecting livelihoods and promoting economic recovery after disasters.



Disaster Risk Financing Policy

In 2024, Vanuatu adopted a **Disaster Risk Financing Policy** developed to assist in understanding, assessing, and planning for the natural disasters. The Policy provides a framework to protect and safeguard the people and the economy from adverse impacts of disasters through the use of a set of disaster risk financing instruments. Collectively, these instruments provide liquidity and budgetary support in the event of a climate disaster.



Vanuatu's 3rd National Communication to the UNFCCC

Vanuatu's 3rd National Communication to the UNFCCC makes it clear that "climate change is the most critical existential threat of our time, and its adverse impacts pose significant threats to the sustainable livelihoods and wellbeing of Vanuatu's people."



Nationally Determined Contribution

In 2022, Vanuatu revised and updated its **Nationally Determined Contribution** to the Paris Agreement, critically including both adaptation and loss and damage targets for the first time. In total, Vanuatu's NDC includes 20 Mitigation commitments, 116 Adaptation commitments, and 12 Loss & Damage commitments to meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement (see section below for an assessment on L&D NDC implementation progress).



Statistical development plan for Vanuatu disaster-related statistics 2024–2028

The **Statistical development plan for Vanuatu disaster-related statistics 2024–2028** aims to coordinate, collate, produce, and disseminate quality and timely disaster-related statistical information for managing and reporting on the risk, occurrence, and impact of major disasters in Vanuatu, including to produce a minimum set of disaster-related statistics that will meet national, regional and international needs for disaster-related statistics.



National Adaptation and Loss and Damage Plan and Provincial Adaptation and Loss & Damage Plans

Vanuatu is currently undertaking a programme to develop a **National Adaptation and Loss and Damage Plan (NALDP) and Provincial Adaptation and Loss & Damage Plans (PALDPs)** to enhance adaptation planning processes with support from a GCF Readiness Grant and implemented by the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI). It is expected that the NALDP will fully integrate loss and damage in the context of limits to adaptation.



Loss & Damage Policy and Implementation Plan

This **Loss & Damage Policy and Implementation Plan** is developed with the support of GGGI and the UK's Small Island Developing States Capacity and Resilience Programme (SIDAR), which aims to provide a high-level and forward looking programme of action to guide Vanuatu's evolving loss and damage commitments and on-ground action. The Loss & Damage Policy clarifies the linkages among adaptation, humanitarian and recovery sectors, and provide high-level, forward looking and locally led approaches for a new and unpredictable future. This is to ensure that Vanuatu is enabled to enact important reforms domestically to ensure that the losses and damages to families, communities and even the largest infrastructure and economic sectors are addressed fairly and equitably.

In 2022, Vanuatu revised and enhanced its NDC including both adaptation and loss and damage targets for the first time. The twelve Loss & Damage targets in Vanuatu's revised and updated **Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement**⁵² are outlined in the table below:

	Commitment	Sector Policy	Policy Ref.	Condi*	USD**
L1	Vanuatu commits to contribute to and engage constructively with the UNFCCC, Paris Agreement, Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage and associated committees, bodies and networks thereof.	CCDRR Policy	7.1.3 and 7.4.4	90	800,000
L2	Vanuatu commits to establish mechanisms to assess and redress loss and damage incurred as a result of climate change.	CCDRR Policy	7.4.4	100	110,000,000
L3	Vanuatu commits to developing a loss and damage implementation framework, including risk sharing, insurance and compensation approaches at replacement value by 2030.	CCDRR Policy	7.4.4	90	685,000
L4	Vanuatu commits to conducting assessments on potential and actual loss and damage across the country linked with ongoing vulnerability assessment processes, and quantifying losses (e.g. food security, culture, ecosystem services and integrity) (National CCDRR Policy 7.4.4), particularly through the Post Disaster Needs Assessment approach.	CCDRR Policy	7.4.4	100	1,900,000
L5	Vanuatu commits to ensuring that the design and construction of public and other major infrastructure and development projects consider current and projected risks in order to minimise, avert and address loss and damage, especially by developing and adhering to climate-proofed building codes, environmental impact assessments, regulations and development guidelines.	CCDRR Policy	7.4.4	90	2,500,000
L6	Vanuatu commits to implement affordable micro- insurance and "climate insurance" models to provide additional safety nets to remedy loss of income, damage to housing, infrastructure, crops and other assets from climate disasters.	Disaster Induced Displacement Policy	A10.8	100	22,000,000
L7	Vanuatu commits to facilitate community-led plans to ensure connections to ancestors and relatives buried in original locations are sustained, and as an important cultural aspect of relocation planning.	Disaster Induced Displacement Policy	A11.2	100	1,700,000
L8	Vanuatu commits to provide continuing support for life-saving and essential health care to affected populations, including rapid measures to repair and/or rebuild damaged health facilities, and erect temporary health facilities with particular attention on restoring WASH infrastructure.	Health Cluster Strategic Plan	1.1	90	25,400,000
L9	Vanuatu commits to address the needs of and provide durable solutions for people affected by displacement, including people at-risk of displacement, displaced people, internal migrants, people living in informal settlements, and host communities (CCDRR Relocation Policy Strategic Area 10) by enabling ministries to work together to provide protections for people at each stage of the displacement cycle (CCDRR Relocation Policy Strategic Area 3).	Disaster Induced Displacement Policy	Area 10 & Area 3	100	9,000,000

* Conditionality (Expressed as %)

** Finance Required

52 <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-08/Vanuatu%20NDC%20Revised%20and%20Enhanced.pdf>

	Commitment	Sector Policy	Policy Ref.	Condi*	USD**
L10	Vanuatu commits to careful consideration of planned relocation as an option of last resort, and where communities do need to move away from hazards, either temporarily or permanently, Vanuatu aims to ensure that lessons learned from previous relocation experiences globally and in the Pacific are considered, so that movement takes place with dignity and with appropriate safeguards and human rights protections in place.	Disaster Induced Displacement Policy	Action 3.7	100	685,000
L11	Vanuatu commits to expand its calls for finance to address the loss, damage, harm and injury suffered by our people and our nation resulting from climate change (including quantifiable as well as intangible and non-economic impacts) within the multilateral climate regime.	Climate Diplomacy Strategy	1.1	100	1,000,000
L12	Vanuatu commits to pursue finance and other forms of support for loss, damage, harm and injury resulting from climate change (including quantifiable as well as intangible and non-economic impacts), beyond the UNFCCC where the multilateral climate processes fail to adequately address the issue.	Climate Diplomacy Strategy	1.2	100	2,000,000

*Note on Conditionality. This percentage reflects the percentage of the total amount that would require external financing. 100% indicates that to achieve this target, full financing would be required from international sources. Any number less than 100% indicates that the Government of Vanuatu has already planned to partially cover the costs of this intervention.

At the regional level, at the regional level, the **Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific**⁵³ is one of the first inter-governmental agreements that bring together the Sendai Framework, Paris Declaration and the UN SDGs. While loss and damage is not specifically referenced as a concept, the intention of the FRDP is to ensure that climate and disaster impacts are holistically considered and addressed collectively.

Loss & Damage is also implicit in the **2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent**⁵⁴, which Leaders of the region have endorsed within the Pacific Island Forum. The 2050 Strategy sets out a long-term approach to working together as a region, with leaders articulating their vision for a resilient Pacific Region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion and prosperity, that ensures all Pacific peoples can lead free, healthy and productive lives. In the document, there is a specific pathway on Resilience & Wellbeing, as well as a Thematic Area on Climate Change & Disasters.

Pacific Island Leaders communiqués have reaffirmed that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific and a commitment to progress the implementation of the Paris Agreement (**Boe Declaration in 2018**⁵⁵, **Kainaki II Declaration in 2019**⁵⁶). In 2021, leaders endorsed the **Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level Rise**⁵⁷ to proclaim existing maritime zones, and the rights and entitlements that flow from them, shall continue to apply, without reduction, notwithstanding any physical changes connected to climate change-related sea-level rise.

In 2023, Leaders endorsed the **Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility**⁵⁸ to guide Pacific Islands Forum governments, communities, non-state actors and partners in ensuring rights based and people-centred movement in the context of climate change, including staying in place, planned relocation, migration, and displacement through a proactive, inclusive and collaborative regional approach that reflects common Pacific interests in a culturally appropriate manner, while respecting national sovereignty and diversity.

53 <https://www.resilientpacific.org/en/framework-resilient-development-pacific>

54 <https://forumsec.org/2050>

55 <https://www.forumsec.org/2018/09/05/boe-declaration-on-regional-security/>

56 <https://www.forumsec.org/2020/11/11/kainaki/>

57 <https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-05/2021%20Declaration-on-Preserving-Maritime-Zones.pdf>

58 <https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/Pacific%20Regional%20Framework%20on%20Climate%20Mobility.pdf>

03

A SHARED NATIONAL UNDERSTANDING OF CLIMATE LOSS AND DAMAGE





Multilateral Action and International Interpretations of Loss & Damage

In 1989, the UN General Assembly adopted Resolution 44/206⁵⁹ on the possible adverse effects of sea-level rise on islands and coastal areas, particularly low-lying coastal areas, which requested key multilateral scientific organisations to take account in their work of the particular situation of islands and coastal areas by undertaking further scientific studies and by seeking ways to address the problem of sea-level rise and recommended that the vulnerability of affected countries and their marine ecosystems to sea-level rise be considered during discussions of a draft framework convention on climate.

Vanuatu subsequently introduced the concept of loss and damage in these global climate change negotiations in 1991, when it proposed an international insurance pool to compensate small island developing states for the impacts of sea-level rise. While Vanuatu's proposal was ultimately rejected, the word 'insurance' was incorporated into Article 4.8 of the Convention⁶⁰. The Convention also recognises that "small island countries...are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change."

Article 1.1 of the convention defines the adverse effects of climate change as "changes in the physical environment or biota resulting from climate change which has significant deleterious effects on the composition, resilience or productivity of natural and managed ecosystems or on the operation of socio-economic systems or on human health and welfare."

Formal consideration of climate loss and damage re-emerged at the 13th Conference of the Parties (COP13) in 2007 with the adoption of the 'Bali Action Plan'⁶¹, which highlights the need for enhanced action on adaptation, including "disaster risk reduction strategies and means to address loss and damage".

At COP 16 in 2010, the Work Programme on Loss and Damage⁶² was established under the Subsidiary Body for Implementation (SBI). As a part of this work program, a literature review⁶³ was undertaken by the UNFCCC Secretariat in which climate loss and damage was broadly defined as "the actual and/or potential manifestation of impacts associated with climate change in developing countries that negatively affect human and natural systems." Their definition further defines loss as "negative impacts in relation to which reparation or restoration is impossible, such as loss of freshwater resources)" and damage as "negative impacts in relation to which reparation or restoration is possible, such as windstorm damage to the roof of a building, or damage to a coastal mangrove forest as a result of coastal surges"⁶⁴. This review also categorises actions to address loss and damage as "risk reduction", "risk retention" and "risk transfer".

- Risk reduction is defined as "the concept and practice of reducing disaster risks through systematic efforts to analyse and manage the causal factors of disasters, including through reduced exposure to hazards, lessened vulnerability of people and property, wise management of land and the environment, and improved preparedness for adverse events". It includes a number of approaches designed to reduce the impacts of a potential adverse event – in the context of climate change, this would be adaptation to the adverse effects of a weather-related extreme. Measures are undertaken before an actual extreme event occurs and may be used effectively in the case of climate-related stressors which occur often and have relatively small impacts.
- Risk Retention is defined as "allowing a country to 'self-insure' itself against climatic stressors, through activities such as building up the resilience of the population through social protection and related measures, or through financial means, such as establishing reserve funds for the purpose of offsetting unexpected financial burdens associated with climatic stressors". Risk retention can be planned, such as an explicit setting aside of public funds for social purposes or for responding to emergency needs. Risk retention can also be used in an unplanned way, such as when insufficient risk reduction measures have been taken and the repair of damage must be financed; however, unplanned and unforeseen expenses can place a significant burden on the public sector, one of the greatest disadvantages of (financial) risk retention.

59 <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/82493?ln=en&v=pdf>

60 https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/convention_text_with_annexes_english_for_posting.pdf

61 <https://unfccc.int/documents/5079>

62 <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2010/cop16/eng/07a01.pdf>

63 <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2012/sbi/eng/inf14.pdf>

64 <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2012/sbi/eng/inf14.pdf>



- Risk Transfer is defined as “approaches help to shift the, mostly financial, risk of loss and damage from one entity to another. Risk transfer is usually associated with a fee for the service provided (i.e. paid to the entity assuming responsibility for the part of the risk that is transferred). Risk transfer is undertaken when a country or entity assesses that the potential loss and damage that it could experience could be greater than its ability to manage that loss and damage. There are a range of risk transfer tools, including insurance, catastrophe bonds, conditional risk transfer and combined insurance-credit programmes.

At the 18th Conference of the Parties (COP) in 2012, Parties agreed to establish institutional arrangements — such as an international mechanism — to address loss and damage under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The next year, at the 19th Conference of the Parties the Warsaw international mechanism (WIM) for loss and damage associated with climate change impacts was established. The COP19 decision⁶⁵ does not define loss and damage, but does acknowledge that “loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change includes, and in some cases involves more than, that which can be reduced by adaptation.”

The Executive Committee of the WIM has subsequently been implementing its five- year rolling workplan⁶⁶ which includes five strategic loss and damage workstreams enhance cooperation and facilitation in relation to:

1. Slow onset events;
2. Non-economic losses;
3. Comprehensive risk management approaches (including assessment, reduction, transfer and retention) to address and build long-term resilience of countries, vulnerable populations and communities to loss and damage, including in relation to extreme and slow onset event;
4. Human mobility, including migration, displacement and planned relocation;
5. Action and support, including finance, technology and capacity-building, to address loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change

Another major international loss and damage milestone occurred in 2015 at COP21 when high pressure negotiations by Vanuatu and other AOSIS members successfully resulted in the inclusion of loss and damage in the Paris Agreement⁶⁷ as a stand-alone Article 8. The Paris Agreement lists eight areas of loss and damage cooperation and facilitation to enhance understanding, action and support may include:

- a. Early warning systems;
- b. Emergency preparedness;
- c. Slow onset events;
- d. Events that may involve irreversible and permanent loss and damage;
- e. Comprehensive risk assessment and management;

⁶⁵ <https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/2013/cop19/eng/10a01.pdf>

⁶⁶ five- year rolling workplan

⁶⁷ http://unfccc.int/files/essential_background/convention/application/pdf/english_paris_agreement.pdf

- f. Risk insurance facilities, climate risk pooling and other insurance solutions;
- g. Non-economic losses; and
- h. Resilience of communities, livelihoods and ecosystems

Negotiators from Vanuatu again worked to integrate loss and damage into the Paris Agreement's Enhanced Transparency Framework and Global Stocktake at COP24 in 2018⁶⁸.

After a review of the WIM at COP25 in 2019, Vanuatu negotiators pushed for a financing arm of the WIM, but accepted the decision⁶⁹ to establish the Santiago network for averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change to catalyse the technical assistance of relevant organizations, bodies, networks and experts for the implementation of relevant approaches at the local, national and regional level in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change.

At COP26 in 2021, the functions of the Santiago Network were agreed⁷⁰ as

- a. Contributing to the effective implementation of the functions 6 of the Warsaw International Mechanism, in line with the provisions in paragraph 7 of decision 2/CP.19 and Article 8 of the Paris Agreement, by catalysing the technical assistance of organizations, bodies, networks and experts;
- b. Catalysing demand-driven technical assistance including of relevant organizations, bodies, networks and experts, for the implementation of relevant approaches to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage in developing countries that are particularly vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate change by assisting in:
 - Identifying, prioritizing and communicating technical assistance needs and priorities;
 - Identifying types of relevant technical assistance;
 - Actively connecting those seeking technical assistance with best suited organizations, bodies, networks and experts;
 - Accessing technical assistance available including from such organizations, bodies, networks and experts;
- c. Facilitating the consideration of a wide range of topics relevant to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage approaches, including but not limited to current and future impacts, priorities, and actions related to averting, minimizing, and addressing loss and damage pursuant to decisions 3/CP.18, and 2/CP.19, the areas referred to in Article 8, paragraph 4, of the Paris Agreement and the strategic workstreams of the five-year rolling workplan of the Executive Committee;
- d. Facilitating and catalysing collaboration, coordination, coherence and synergies to accelerate action by organizations, bodies, networks and experts, across communities of practices, and for them to deliver effective and efficient technical assistance to developing countries
- e. Facilitating the development, provision and dissemination of, and access to, knowledge and information on averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage, including comprehensive risk management approaches, at the regional, national and local level;
- f. Facilitating, through catalysing technical assistance, of organizations, bodies, networks and experts, access to action and support (finance, technology and capacity building) under and outside the Convention and the Paris Agreement, relevant to averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change, including urgent and timely responses to the impacts of climate change

As evidenced by the historical evolution of the climate loss and damage concept at the international level, there remains an absence of a clear definition, while there is a preponderance of conceptual elements and interpretations. Such “constructive ambiguity” on the meaning of loss & damage has been politically important in international negotiations on an incredibly sensitive issue, while making it difficult to enable action required at the national and local levels to actually address climate losses and damages.

Vanuatu policy makers, development partners and development practitioners require a clearer understanding, and definitional boundaries to enable their work as current confusion on loss and damage planning and governance arise when different stakeholders have contrasting perceptions and definitions in mind.

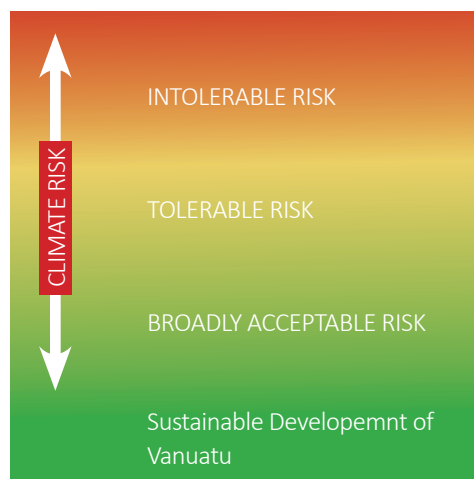
68 https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/l23_0.pdf

69 <https://unfccc.int/documents/210477>

70 <https://unfccc.int/documents/310471>

Conceptual Framework of Loss & Damage in Vanuatu

Given the international understandings above, a conceptual framework which captures Vanuatu's perspectives loss and damage, including making clear the interlinkages among mitigation, adaptation, humanitarian and disaster response activities is presented here:



It is the policy of the Government of Vanuatu to ensure that its people, ecosystems, socio-economic systems thrive and it is able to meet its Sustainable Development Goals⁷¹ in a space that is safe and secure, with a level of risk that is considered broadly acceptable. It is acknowledged that climate change and other hazards mean that risk cannot be entirely avoided, but efforts must be undertaken to ensure these risks are acceptable and do not compromise sustainable development and wellbeing. At all costs, intolerable risks must be avoided to prevent irreparable and unacceptable loss and damage.

Successfully achieving this low risk outcome for Vanuatu requires action on the part of all stakeholders, that is led and guided by the policies of the Government of Vanuatu across sectors and at all levels of governance in a holistic, long-term, locally determined, country-owned and programmatic way.

Averting Loss and Damage through Mitigation of Greenhouse Gas Emissions

The Government's highest ambition is to encourage and enable actions that remove the source of climate risks, and thereby avert climate losses and damages from occurring. The removal of climate risks involves reducing the concentration of greenhouse gases (GHGs) into the atmosphere. Climate change mitigation is defined as "human interventions to reduce the amount of greenhouse gas emissions released into the atmosphere from diverse sources and enhancing their removal from the atmosphere by diverse sinks."⁷² Thus mitigation actions (undertaken domestically and internationally) are an important component in Vanuatu's efforts to avert, minimize and address loss and damage. Vanuatu's 2020 NDC aims for total GHG emissions from all the mitigation sectors to be around 524.33 Gg CO₂e by 2030 (which is approximately 12.5% less than the estimated total GHG emissions form in the BAU Scenario), noting that overall Vanuatu is already carbon negative due to its forest and marine ecosystem sinks.

Minimising Loss & Damage through Reducing Disaster and Climate Risk and Adaptation

Given the unacceptably slow efforts of the international community to adopt fossil-fuel free technology and systems, climate-causing GHG emissions continue to rise and according to the IPCC's 6th Assessment Report⁷³:

“Widespread and rapid changes in the atmosphere, ocean, cryosphere and biosphere have occurred. Human-caused climate change is already affecting many weather and climate extremes in every region across the globe. This has led to widespread adverse impacts and related losses and damages to nature and people (high confidence). Vulnerable communities who have historically contributed the least to current climate change are disproportionately affected (high confidence).”

⁷¹ <https://www.gov.vu/images/publications/Vanuatu2030-EN-FINAL-sf.pdf>

⁷² <https://unfccc.int/topics/introduction-to-mitigation>

⁷³ https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf



Vanuatu has made adaptation and risk reduction one of its top development priorities, to reduce the risks facing island communities, urban populations, biodiversity and socio-cultural systems.

Adaptation is referred to by the UNFCCC as:

“adjustments in ecological, social or economic systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli and their effects. It refers to changes in processes, practices and structures to moderate potential damages or to benefit from opportunities associated with climate change.”

Risk Reduction is defined in the context of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030⁷⁴ as:

“preventing new and reducing existing disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries and managing residual risk, all of which contribute to strengthening resilience and therefore to the achievement of sustainable development.”

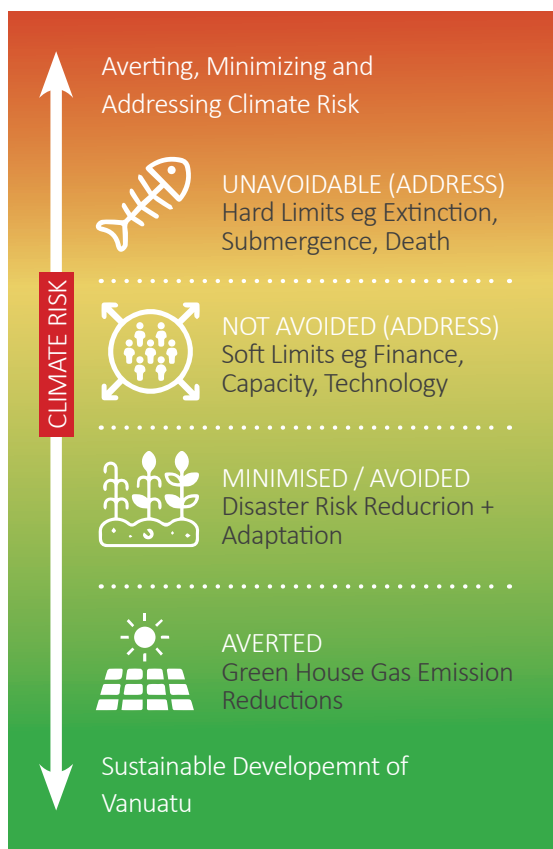
In essence, Vanuatu’s decades-long efforts to minimise and avoid risk through Disaster Risk Reduction and Climate Change Adaptation have been cornerstones in its efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage. Vanuatu’s National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction was established to ensure that this larger collective of issues was governed coherently as their actions are often undertaken by the same stakeholders and yield complementary outcomes.

Addressing Loss & Damage that has not been Avoided or is Unavoidable

If all the risks to Vanuatu’s sustainable development were averted through adequate GHG mitigation, or minimised through effective adaptation and DRR, loss and damage would be inconsequential. But the fact is that not only has the international community failed to rein in emissions, they have also provided inadequate finance, technology and capacity to enable successful risk reduction. Residual risk is increasing and risk retention is more and more common.

Vanuatu faces both hard and soft limits to adaptation in addressing climate loss and damage. Hard limits refer to the absolute constraints beyond which adaptation is no longer feasible. For Vanuatu, these include the irreversible loss of land due to sea level rise and coastal erosion. Despite efforts to construct seawalls and implement other coastal defences, the relentless advance of the ocean means that some areas will inevitably become uninhabitable. This physical reality makes relocation the only option for many communities, presenting a significant challenge given the cultural and emotional ties to ancestral lands.

74 <https://www.undrr.org/terminology/disaster-risk-reduction>



Soft limits, on the other hand, are barriers that can potentially be overcome with sufficient resources, planning, and changes in policy. In Vanuatu, these include financial, technical, and institutional constraints. The high cost of advanced adaptive infrastructure and the technical expertise required for effective implementation are often beyond the reach of local governments and communities. Additionally, geographical separation, communications breakdowns, and limited institutional capacity hinder the timely and effective execution of adaptation strategies. For instance, the reliance on international aid, which is often fragmented and insufficient, highlights the need for more coordinated and sustained financial support to overcome these soft limits.

Cultural and social dimensions also present significant limits to adaptation in Vanuatu. The relocation of communities due to climate impacts disrupts social structures and threatens the preservation of cultural heritage, language and traditional knowledge, which are vital to the identity and resilience of the Ni-Vanuatu people. Moreover, gender dynamics, where women and young women are often marginalized, pose challenges to inclusive adaptation efforts.

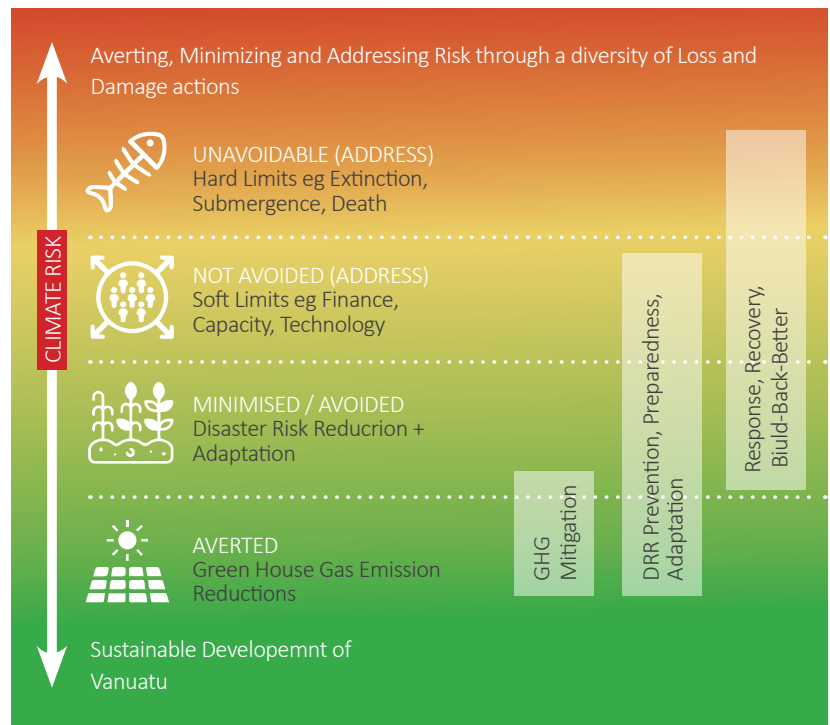
In short, averting, minimising and addressing loss and damage is a part of a continuum that begins with averting the crisis by reducing climate change-causing green house gas emissions, minimising the impacts by reducing risks and adapting, and eventually and often simultaneously, addressing the inevitable loss and damage that communities and families suffer.

The 6th Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change IPCC confirms⁷⁵ that if more effort is expended by high emitting countries to avert and minimise risks, there will be less loss and damage. The reality however, is that those most responsible have been denying and delaying adequate action since before the UN climate convention was developed, meaning that Vanuatu is now facing intolerable risks and suffering unavoidable losses and damages.

75 <https://www.ipcc.ch/2023/03/20/press-release-ar6-synthesis-report/>

Overlapping Solutions to Avert, Minimise and Address Loss and Damage

In each stage of addressing risks, there are a range of actions that can be taken by Government and its partners at all levels. There is a strong potential for each one of these actions to achieve several simultaneous goals, including serving to meet Vanuatu's Sustainable Development Goals, mitigating GHG emissions, helping to adapt to worsening climate impacts, and supporting the affected community to address residual loss and damage. It is hard to draw a clear line around the function of each action, where its effectiveness begins and ends.



Take for example, the solar-powered satellite internet stations installed by the Santo Sunset Environment Network across the remote Western Santo coastline. Using renewable energy, they may be classified as a mitigation action. At the same time these stations are used by the community to obtain important agricultural capacity information, including on the use of crop varieties and farming practices that have the highest tolerance for the drought conditions increasingly affecting the area, serving as an important adaptation action. After an extreme rainfall and landslide event, the internet allowed the local community disaster and climate change committee (CDCCC) to connect with the national disaster management office and begin a response and recovery process as part of their efforts to address the resulting loss and damage. One action can serve multiple risk-related functions.

Given Vanuatu's huge investment in adaptation over the years, it will be important to evaluate each adaptation strategy being employed at all levels to determine how effective it may be in addressing loss and damage, even if it was not designed originally with this function in mind. Similarly, new approaches developed to address loss and damage, may find useful application to support DRR or climate adaptation.

A Local Definition of Climate Loss & Damage

Based on this initial conceptualisation of averting, minimising and addressing, and in response to the need for clarity around the scope and breadth of climate loss and damage, the Government of Vanuatu conducted in-depth consultations with a range of stakeholders at all levels, including from government, civil society, the private sector, traditional authorities, faith leaders, development partners, academic institutions, regional organisations and independent experts from international, regional, national and sub national levels. Collectively, Vanuatu stakeholders have developed a Vanuatu-specific concept of loss and damage, conceptualised into 15 core elements:

Components of a Local L&D Definition

Avert, Minimise, Address	Climate and Non Climate Vulnerability	Climate Justice / Historical Responsibility
Comprehensive Risk Management	Worsening Future Impacts +1.5; Tipping Points	Irreversible and Permanent
Economic and Non Economic	Adverse / Negative Effects of Climate Change	Slow Onset and Extreme Events
New and Additional Finance Needs	Local, Sub national, National	Losses vs. Damages
Traditional Knowledge	Injury / Harm Liability & Compensation	Limits to Adaptation / Residual Risks

The narrative of this concept, expanded below, further defines and elucidates this national understanding of loss and damage, placing clear boundaries around what is and what is not contained within Vanuatu's Loss & Damage Policy and Implementation Plan.

Climate Justice / Historical Responsibility	The people of Vanuatu are experiencing increasingly severe impacts from climate change, driven by increases in greenhouse gas (GHG) concentrations which are unequivocally caused by human activities associated with fossil fuels and industry . Vanuatu and other Pacific Small Island Developing States are not responsible for climate change , and have contributed less than 0.0016% and 0.02% respectively of global historical greenhouse gas emissions.
Avert, Minimise, Address	Climate impacts, losses and damages can be constrained by the level of preventive action, including through reducing greenhouse gas emissions (averting risk) and by adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures (minimising risk) .
Climate and Non Climate Vulnerability	Vanuatu's climate vulnerability stems from insufficient global mitigation efforts , as well as inadequate levels of action and support for adaptation as a consequence of unfulfilled obligations of developed countries under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change ⁷⁶ , the Paris Agreement ⁷⁷ and under other instruments of international law. Exacerbated by its direct exposure to a range of non-climate risks, Vanuatu's climate vulnerability is one of the highest in the world.
Worsening Future Impacts +1.5; Tipping Points	Climate change catastrophic impacts are expected to worsen exponentially when Global warming exceeds the 1.5°C temperature threshold set by the Paris Agreement. Further warming increases the likelihood and expands the impacts of abrupt and/or irreversible changes in the climate system , making it particularly challenging to predict the impacts, losses and damages that are triggered when tipping points are breached, and earth's critical planetary boundaries are crossed.
Comprehensive Risk Management	Comprehensive Risk Management (CRM) is an approach for managing the risk of loss and damage and addressing actual loss and damage. There are a range of actions being employed currently within Vanuatu's territory to reduce growing climate risks. The comprehensive risk management landscape in Vanuatu includes a diverse and multi-stakeholder climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction sector , which works to reduce vulnerability to climate impacts by minimising risks, building resilience and supporting communities and ecosystems adjust to changing climate conditions, a vibrant humanitarian sector which focuses on saving lives, alleviating suffering, and providing immediate relief after climate disasters, as well as a recovery sector , which focuses on helping communities rebuild, restore and return to safe, sustainable conditions, including through medium and long-term programmes and national platforms.

⁷⁶ Article 4 (3) Developed country Parties shall provide such financial resources, including for the transfer of technology, needed by the developing country Parties to meet the agreed full incremental costs of implementing their commitments under the Convention, taking into the need for adequacy and predictability in the flow of funds.

⁷⁷ Article 9 (1) Developed country Parties shall provide financial resources to assist developing country Parties with respect to both mitigation and adaptation in continuation of their existing obligations under the Convention

Irreversible and Permanent	It is no longer possible to prevent or minimise all climate risks as historical greenhouse gas emissions and investments into fossil fuel industries have already locked planetary systems into a certain level of climate impacts. Moreover, not all climate change impacts can be successfully adapted to, whether because of financial, technical, or physical limits and constraints. The actions undertaken are far too little and long too late, and as a consequence climate losses and damages, including those that are irreversible and permanent , will continue to occur.
Adverse / Negative Effects of Climate Change	In Vanuatu's context, climate losses and damages refer to the negative impacts of climate change , including those that are permanent, irreversible, or difficult to address due to soft and hard limits to adaptation and risk reduction, and are a result of inadequate global action on mitigation and adaptation.
Economic and Non Economic	The harms being suffered by Vanuatu's people, ecosystems and economy include impacts on goods and services with market or economic value (economic loss and damage) such as to property and public infrastructure, crops, tourism and other sources of income and as well as impacts on assets which may be intangible, unquantifiable or unlinked to economic value (non-economic loss and damage) such as loss of human lives, cultural heritage, health, biodiversity and ecosystems.
Slow Onset and Extreme Events	Moreover, climate hazards manifest at different timescales, and the speed at which impacts emerge is variable, including those which occur over hours or days as a result of extreme events such as tropical cyclones, extreme rainfall, meteorological drought and those which manifest over months, years of decades as a result of slow onset events such as sea level rise, ocean acidification and groundwater salinification.
Losses vs. Damages	Damages may be understood as impacts that can be repaired or restored (such as windstorm damage to the roof of a building, or damage to a coastal mangrove forest from a tidal surge). While, Losses may be understood as impacts that cannot be repaired or restored (such as permanent shifts in tuna distributions away from territorial boundaries, or loss of cultural heritage associated with sea level inundation of a sacred site).
Local, Sub national, National	Because the impacts of global warming manifest locally , losses and damages are inherently a local challenge, but can be considered at sub national, national and even regional levels for analysis and response. In the context of multilevel action to address loss and damage, Vanuatu adheres to the principle of subsidiarity which holds that loss and damage decision-making authority should be devolved closest to where climate impacts and responsibility for outcomes will occur .
Traditional Knowledge	Climate loss and damage threatens indigenous traditional knowledge by disrupting ecosystems, altering ancestral lands, and undermining cultural practices that rely on specific environmental conditions, making it essential to address the loss of language, culture, customary practice and knowledge as a part of all solutions spaces. Indigenous people and communities have internationally protected rights as well as possessing the core capacities required to address climate impacts in a self-determined way.
Limits to Adaptation / Residual Risks	As climate impacts become more severe, the effectiveness of adaptation strategies will diminish and loss and damage is expected to increase. Limits to adaptation are already being breached on a daily basis in Vanuatu , with communities ineffectively investing time and energy on resilience strategies that cannot withstand the climate impacts occurring now and projected to worsen in the future.
New and Additional Finance Needs	New and additional finance for loss and damage is crucial to address the growing impacts of climate change, as sectors and households face escalating costs from extreme events and slow-onset changes. Innovative and accessible financial mechanisms are required to allow direct access to vulnerable groups. Vanuatu aims to ensure finance for loss and damage is sourced from all possible funding arrangements including national budget allocations, concessional finance, risk transfer instruments, multilateral climate funds, bilateral support, innovative use of taxes and levies and more.
Injury / Harm Liability & Compensation	Polluting countries and companies hold the historical responsibility for harm to the climate system and other parts of the environment and for the injuries suffered by particularly vulnerable people of present and future generations. As a consequence, there exists a right to remedy and reparation including access to justice, restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction, and guarantees of non-repetition . Vanuatu holds that the right to remedy ensures that affected individuals or communities can seek redress through fair and accessible legal processes, obtain compensation or restitution for damages, and receive support to restore their well-being and dignity.

Typology of Vanuatu Actions to Address Loss and Damage

Given the severity, and often existential nature of the climate losses and damages to the people of Vanuatu, a range of actions have long been undertaken to address these impacts, often directly by communities, local private sector actors and government departments. Based on this experience, an initial typology of actions to address loss and damage has been developed, and is being further refined. The following section provides concrete examples of several of these relevant actions that address climate loss and damage in Vanuatu.

Vanuatu Typology of Relevant Actions to address L&D

Climate Risk and Impact Assessment, Monitoring and Data Analysis	Capacity Building, Education and Knowledge Brokering	Enabling Strategies, Plans, Policies and Laws
Social Protection Systems	Early Warning Systems	Direct Access Finance (e.g. Budget Support, Cash Transfer)
Insurance and Risk Transfer Instruments	Disaster Response and Humanitarian Relief	Rehabilitation of Systems and Services
Reconstruction of Tangible Assets	Livelihood Transformation	Socio-Cultural Reorganisation
Memorialisation	Relocation, Retreat	Redress, Reparation, Restitution, Remedy, Compensation

New Modalities for Direct Access by Vulnerable Individuals

Vanuatu's Blockchain-powered Cash Transfer Programme⁷⁸ has been trialled and implemented with the intention to disperse finance directly to households and individuals. This innovative financial equity transfer system has been established alongside local private sector and civil society actors, and allows for a better distribution of goods and services to those most vulnerable. Beneficiaries are credited with funds and then are empowered chose the goods that best suits their recovery needs and pay local vendors who they know and trust via a "tap and pay" card or from their mobile phones. Vendors are provided with smart phones and trained on how to use them to accept card-based payments, and importantly, all transactions, including what is being purchased and where, is fully traceable, monitored by all donors and implementers.

The approach has been utilized in the remote area supported by the Santo Sunset Environment Network⁷⁹, an indigenous-led network, convenes community disaster and climate change committees across 42 indigenous villages in remote Santo Island to mobilize action across large scales that simplify government entry and support. The network actively works to assure women's leadership and gender inclusivity in their efforts to address climate change.

Moving forward from an initial trial by non-government actors (including NGOs and local businesses), the government has decided to create its own cash transfer system using the Vanuatu Post⁸⁰. This decision was taken, as the pilot used proprietary financial software which was deemed by government to be too expensive and restrictive. A private firm was hired to create new systems for the Government, but the rollout has been delayed for capacity, financial and technical reasons.

78 <https://www.vbrc.vu/unblocked-cash>

79 www.SantoSunset.org

80 https://www.dailypost.vu/news/government-defends-cash-transfer-initiative/article_403d2ba9-b1f5-50f0-ab24-883ffd3083ca.html



Micro-Insurance Products

While insurance is not a silver bullet, or even a major answer to the problems faced in Vanuatu, new initiatives are beginning to look at micro insurance as part of the solution space. Currently, there is no commercially available insurance mechanism to finance slow onset losses and damages partly because these events do not have a clearly defined “trigger” that signals the need for mobilization. However, few insurance companies in Vanuatu products that adequately meet the recovery costs of loss and damages incurred by climate events.

Insurance is not a viable option for most families in Vanuatu, as premiums are beyond the country’s GNI per capita of \$3,240 (2021)⁸¹. There is also a distrust of the insurance industry, seen with trepidation by many as a loan or an expense with no outcome. As a result, despite the high exposure to climate hazards, only a small percentage (5%) of people in Vanuatu has some kind of insurance coverage⁸².

The UN Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) launched in 2022 a micro-insurance product in Vanuatu⁸³ designed to protect climate vulnerable populations such as the poor, women and girls, Ni-Vanuatu families, and people with disabilities, against the adverse financial impacts of extreme weather hazards. The product works by providing a quick injection of relief funds within 10-14 days following a natural disaster, and is aimed at Vanuatu’s smallholder farmers, fishers, MSMEs, women-headed households, and people with disabilities.

The product was deemed a success after the twin Category 4 cyclones Kevin and Judy which struck Vanuatu says apart in March of 2023. There were 84 beneficiaries, out of the 122 that bought the product in the pilot phase, to receive the first historic payout of claims in Vanuatu totalling US\$ 23,682⁸⁴.

One female beneficiary living in the capital city recounted receiving a payout within 14 days of the cyclone and the quick access to funds allowed her to repair the roof of her family home and restore normalcy in her life. A male farmer beneficiary used his payout to rebuild the farm, purchase new seeds, and resume selling his crops at the local market.

Moving forward, more effort will be expended to sensitize the local population on the use and benefits of insurance products, as well as investment in premium subsidies to make this solution available to the widest possible population, many of whom cannot afford additional risk transfer instruments.

81 <https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/VUT/vanuatu/gni-per-capita>

82 <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11027-022-10002-z>

83 <https://www.uncdf.org/article/7992/uncdf-launches-first-parametric-micro-insurance-product-for-climate-vulnerable-communities-in-vanuatu>

84 <https://www.uncdf.org/article/8288/interest-in-parametric-insurance-growing-after-historic-first-payout-in-vanuatu>



Regional Catastrophic Risk Finance Pooling

Vanuatu was beneficiary of the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Insurance Initiative (PCRAFI), when 2015 when Tropical Cyclone Pam triggered a US\$1.9 million emergency cash injection⁸⁵. Vanuatu received the funds within one week of the event to support the recovery process, including the mobilization of nurses to affected provinces.

The payout is based on a hybrid of parametric triggers and modelled loss approaches, which utilises parameters of actual events but takes a modelled the loss to define whether it has been triggered. It demonstrates the important role that parametric triggers play in effecting rapid insurance payouts after disaster strikes.

This Pacific risk pooling facility was launched with the support of the Japanese Government, the World Bank, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), and has since evolved into the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Insurance Company: PCRIC⁸⁶ of which Vanuatu is a member.

PCRIC uses a risk pool that is created by combining the insurance needs of individual nations into a single diversified portfolio of risk. Since it is highly unlikely that several countries will be hit by a major disaster within the same year, the diversification among participating countries creates a more stable and less capital-intensive portfolio. Additionally, the larger size of the collective pool generally means PCRIC is able to offer lower insurance premiums to Pacific countries than the insurance market would be able to offer if nations sought insurance coverage individually.

Policies taken out under this form of insurance are based upon the outcome of a ‘catastrophe model’ and is based on a number of parameters and metrics covering the type of catastrophe being insured – for example, tropical cyclone. Using this model allows the insurer to predict the value of losses likely to be incurred (the ‘modelled loss’) should an insured disaster occur, and agree with the insured party ahead of time the value of a payout to be made.

Though the amount may not fully cover the actual costs incurred, parametric insurance avoids the need for on-the-ground assessment before a claim can be settled, offers predictability and enables pre-planning of expenditures against a guaranteed amount.

Following a tropical cyclone, if the modelled loss as calculated by PCRIC’s catastrophe model exceeds a pre-defined threshold, or ‘trigger’ then a payout will be made. This trigger is calculated to represent the magnitude of loss that would be expected to occur

85 <https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2017/03/31/pacific-islands-take-the-lead-on-financial-protection-from-disasters>

86 <https://pcric.org/>

once every ten years on average (a “1-in-10-year event”), meaning every year a country has a 10% chance of a payout being due per policy held. For any modelled loss above the trigger, the amount of the payout increases as the modelled loss increases up to a pre-defined coverage limit per policy. This means higher payouts are due for more severe events.

Importantly, because the amount of the payout available is pre-agreed there is no need for payment to be withheld pending assessment of the disaster impact.

The Government has for several years not always been able to afford the premiums offered by PCRIC, even when heavily subsidised by international partners. It may be necessary to fully cover costs of Government participation in the scheme. Another area of work would be to ensure that payouts are used for specific, high impact investments, including community action to address loss and damage in lieu of spending on high capital items like infrastructure.

Community Relocation

From 2021 through 2023, when the world faced a rare multi-year La Niña (nicknamed a ‘triple dip La Niña’⁸⁷), the ni-Vanuatu communities on Santo Island experienced a series of extreme rainfall events in the first two months of 2022, dumping nearly one metre of rain on an already soggy rainy-season landscape. Then, beginning on 23 February 2022, Western Santo villagers experienced three strong earthquakes, each over M 4.6.

At 6pm on 9 March 2022, as a result of rain-drenched topsoil and the destabilising effects of the earthquakes over the previous weeks, the entire mountainside of the Indigenous village of Molpoi collapsed, sending topsoil, rock and debris more than 300m wide and 30m deep barrelling down the valley, over 2km to the ocean.

In less than one hour, the community of Molpoi had lost its coconut plantations (3,000 trees), cacao groves (3500 trees), water taro gardens, kava cash cropping sites, fruit orchards, livestock pastures and subsistence food plots. Thick mud blanketed the village, destroying homes, the community meeting hall, a local kindergarten and the village cemetery.

In the absence of an official response, the community was supported by a locally-based NGO, the Santo Sunset Environment Network to identify a relocation area, and have since moved all households away from the landslide area. Immediately after the first landslide, SSEN was the first organisation on the scene. It supported the Molpoi Community Disaster and Climate Change Committee to undertake initial disaster assessments, including on non-economic impacts, to channel through the official Ministry of Climate Change and National Disaster Management Office institutional arrangements⁸⁸.

Relocation is a difficult and expensive endeavour, which has devastating impacts on both the displaced population but also on the host/recipient communities. More work needs to be done to define thresholds for relocation, costs, non-economic consequences to culture and wellbeing, as well as approaches to ensure migration occurs with local ownership and dignity throughout the process.

Early Warning Systems for Minimising Flood Loss and Damage

The Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazard Division under the Ministry of Climate Change currently manages the Vanuatu geophysical network which includes monitoring stations across the country, with the aim of providing reliable information that decision makers and general public can use to take immediate action to minimize climate impacts within an specific area.

With support of the GCF-funded Climate Information Services for Resilient Development in Vanuatu Project (VanKIRAP), new climate monitoring equipment was installed to provide climate information and early warning of severe weather events.

Specifically, an Automated Weather Station (AWS) was installed at the Vanuatu Agricultural Research and Training Centre in Luganville, and two Automatic Rainfall Gauges (ARG) were installed at the villages of Vunaspéf and Sarakata Hydro to collect and provide more timely information to the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department. Each of the new devices is equipped

87 <https://earthobservatory.nasa.gov/images/150691/la-nina-times-three>

88 <https://openrepository.aut.ac.nz/items/a1287767-ac3f-4fa1-8a43-4e983d6cf267>



with three communication options—a Vanuatu Government wireless broadband modem, a cellular phone connection, and a satellite transmitter, making it possible to monitor the weather and water levels directly in these locations 24/7, no matter the conditions.

This investment marks a major advance for the people of Espiritu Santo Island because the new AWS and ARGs give early warnings before loss and damage occurs, which gives residents and authorities time to take decisive action to save lives and property. With advance information, people are able to make better planning decisions about building infrastructure, water usage, and transportation.

Working in combination with a The Flood Management Plan, Simulation Exercises and Capacity Building, the new ARGs and AWS provide automated early warning notifications that help the communities at each installation location prepare for natural disasters that might affect their livelihoods.

Moving forward more effort is required to extend early warning coverage to all remote areas of Vanuatu, and ensure that the general population has the information and capacity required to act on the information received.

Building Back Better through Traditional Knowledge

Many communities in Vanuatu are building resilience by using the post-disaster phases to restore physical infrastructure, societal systems and institutional structures, and revitalise livelihoods, economies and the environment in ways that reduce risk and strengthen recovery capacity.

For example, a project funded by UNESCO and implemented by the Vanuatu National Cultural Centre and Museum focused on understanding how traditional architecture and building practices actually minimised loss of life during category 5 Cyclone Pam⁸⁹. They recognized the Intangible Cultural Heritage of the nakamal, or traditional meeting house, as well as its wind resistant design. They also highlighted the high risk of it being lost due to a variety of climate and non-climate factors.

With through research, the museum is now advocating for safeguarding the nakamal through measures, including natural resource management, retention and transmission of building know-how, and legal protection. Importantly the programme has documented the construction steps for building traditional cyclone-safe houses using indigenous knowledge.

Engineers⁹⁰, international universities^{91, 92} and NGOs^{93,94} are now using these traditional designs to roll out cyclone safehouses in other parts of Vanuatu where this building knowledge may have already been lost.

The Vanuatu CCDRR Policy 2nd Edition⁹⁵ recognises the importance of traditional knowledge for maintaining the resilience of indigenous communities. The policy outlines priority activities including traditional knowledge research (collecting, analysing and storing TK) and integrating these knowledge systems into formal and informal school curricula. Such initiative has been purposely priorities in such away to retain and maintain the TK which is not only cultural heritage but being resilience in our context is perpetuate fundamentally on culture and traditional foundations. Further providing a valuable avenue for decision makers utilise TK in important decision making.

More effort is required to document the rapidly disappearing traditional knowledge used to address climate and non climate loss and damage. Faster climate change means that work to memorialise and share this knowledge must accelerate.

Quantifying Non-Economic Loss & Damage in PDNAs

Vanuatu has engaged extensively with loss and damage issues within the disaster context, conducting at least three post-disaster needs assessments (PDNAs), which have a more immediate and operational focus on the losses and damages experienced after extreme events. Vanuatu's efforts in PDNAs typically quantify the direct economic losses (e.g., infrastructure damage, loss of livelihoods) and identify the needs for humanitarian aid, reconstruction, and capacity building. While Vanuatu's disaster community has tried to consider non-economic losses, such as educational impacts and social disruption, the primary emphasis has been on economic needs assessments for recovery.

In the aftermath of category 5 Cyclone Harold, a group of experts from the Department of Environmental Protection & Conservation and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme made a first ever assessment of the loss and damage to the environment and ecosystem services of forests, water systems and coral reefs to feed into the formal Post Disaster Needs Assessment process.

A base methodology was devised and in accordance with methodologies and guidance from the World Bank⁹⁶, but tailored to Vanuatu's contexts and data limitations.

89 <https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000248144.locale=es>

90 <https://reporter.anu.edu.au/all-stories/disaster-ready-vanuatu-safehouse-to-blend-western-and-indigenous-engineering>

91 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2590061720300636>

92 https://www.researchgate.net/publication/315037188_Traditional_Cyclone_Shelters_in_Vanuatu

93 <https://www.sista.com.vu/erromango-village-prepares-for-2024-cyclone-season-through-traditional-architecture/>

94 <http://bit.ly/44dcxGv>

95 <https://www.nab.vu/document/vanuatu-national-ccdr-policy-2022-2030-2nd-edition>

96 <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/773111493642626075/Post-disaster-needs-assessment-guidelines-environment>

Moving beyond narrative reports of cyclone Harold impacts on the environment, the team went further by assigning economic values to the economic effects on particular habitats and ecosystem services. Without full environmental baseline statistics, the team selected two ecosystems Forests and Marine for which Vanuatu has 1) robust GIS remote sensing baseline data 2) globally and nationally available economic values.

Quantification of the environmental services from the selected habitats and ecosystems is inherently difficult, as they include a range of economic and non-economic functions. In practice, total economic value is nearly impossible to calculate because the data required to do so are rarely available. While this attempt focused on quantifiable loss and damage, much was left out, due to methodological shortcomings, in regard to traditional knowledge and culture that suffered severe impacts.

The economic value of the TC Harold disaster on environmental services was calculated using a basic benefits-transfer methodology drawn from available economic valuation studies undertaken globally, in Vanuatu and used during TC Pam for the PDNA process (for example De Groot et al 2012⁹⁷ Global estimates of the value of ecosystems and their services in monetary units and Mackey et al 2017⁹⁸ Vanuatu Ecosystem and Socio-economic Resilience Analysis and Mapping (ESRAM)).

For both Forests and Marine Ecosystems, the Environmental PDNA experts calculated economic effects by estimating the area affected and multiplied this by an economic value per area, including discounting for future effects:

- Forest Loss was calculated at USD526,400/km²/yr * 15 Years
- Severe Forest Damage was calculated at USD263,200/km²/yr * 5 Years
- Moderate Forest Damage was calculated at USD131,600/km²/yr * 0.5 Years
- Coral Reef Economic Value was calculated as the de Groot value 35,915,000USD/km²/yr
- Mangrove Economic Value was calculated as the de Groot value of 19,384,500USD/km²/yr
- Sea Grass Economic Value was calculated as the de Groot median value of 2,676,000USD/km²/yr
- Marine Loss was calculated at ecosystem value/km²/yr * 15 Years
- Marine Damage was calculated at ecosystem value/km²/yr * 5 Years

By estimating ecological loss and damage, the Government was able to put forward appropriate recovery strategies for impacted habitats and costed rehabilitation interventions for affected ecosystem services.

For the purposes of this PDNA, Damage was defined as the partial destruction of the physical habitat and the ecosystem. Damaged ecosystems experience impairment of the goods and services they are able to provide for human benefit. There is an economic effect associated with a damaged ecosystem which will last over a period of time (depending on the regenerative characteristics of the specific ecosystem and the severity of the damage). Loss was defined as the total destruction of the physical habitat and the ecosystem. Lost ecosystems experience full cessation of the goods and services they previously provided for human benefit. There is a total economic effect associated with a lost ecosystem, and no benefits will again flow until the ecosystem is able to completely regenerate, often over many years and depending on the growth/reproduction characteristics of the system. Forests and Coral Reefs take at least a decade, often much longer, to regrow from a total loss.

Formal methodological improvements must still be made, and PDNA coordinators and partners should place a renewed investment into including non-economic and environmental costs in the final tables and requests for international support.

97 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212041612000101>

98 <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2212041612000101>

04

VANUATU LOSS AND DAMAGE POLICY



Governance of Loss and Damage

Given the wide breadth of conceptual and definitional elements outlined above, the governance of loss and damage in Vanuatu must be comprehensive and complementary, requiring some reforms in the current approaches to climate or disaster governance frameworks.

Loss and damage is characterised by the complex, multidimensional nature of the impacts and risks that climate change imposes on different people and places over time. Levels of exposure, sensitivity, vulnerability and adaptive capacity vary dramatically between people, locations and ecosystems, depending upon a complex set of environmental, social, political, geographic and economic factors. They will also vary greatly over time as climate hazards evolve, intensify, intersect and compound one another due to global heating. Governance of loss and damage must be able to contend with this complexity through comprehensive, diverse, flexible and innovative approaches.

Policy Priorities

- Loss and Damage, including actions to avert, minimise and address it, must be acknowledged and mainstreamed in all climate-relevant laws, policies, plans and strategies developed by all sectors and at all levels, for example in the revised National Sustainable Development Plan, Provincial Development Plans, Area Council Development Plans, Ministry Corporate Plans, Department Business Plans, New Project Proposals, Sector Strategies, Project Implementation Plans etc
- Vanuatu's Loss and Damage priorities and initiatives and programmes should be based on broad stakeholder consultation, including with government officials at all levels, civil society, the private sector, development partners, regional technical experts, scientists, academic and humanitarian practitioners, chiefs and traditional authorities and faith leaders.
- The Parliament, Malvatumauri Council of Chiefs and the Council of Ministers should utilise screening criteria to ensure that their legislative initiatives or policy endorsements enable, and do not undermine, efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage
- The Department of Strategic Policy, Planning & Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) and the Prime Minister's Office should ensure that all proposed development projects, including new foreign aid support, aligns with and strengthens efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage
- The National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction should formalise and resource a Thematic Working Group on Loss and Damage to guide and provide technical inputs into loss and damage initiatives, projects and programmes. The group should be inclusive of experts from within and outside of government, including from civil society, the private sector, development partners, regional technical experts, scientists, academic and humanitarian practitioners
- The National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction should ensure that all climate and disaster relevant projects under its oversight align with efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage
- Within the Ministry of Climate Change, the Department of Climate Change, the National Disaster Management Office, the Vanuatu Meteorology & Geohazards Department and the Secretariat of the NAB should review their respective mandates to ensure there are clear lines of responsibility vis-à-vis efforts to govern actions to avert, minimise and address loss and damage, including for example, determining an institutional lead for loss and damage coordination
- To further implementation of the Decentralisation Act 2013 (CAP 230), the 6 Provincial Government Councils (Torba, Sanma, Penama, Malampa, Shefa, Tafea) and the three Municipal Councils (Port Vila City Council (PVCC), Lenakel Town Municipal Council (LTMC) and Luganville Municipal Council (LMC)) should integrate climate loss and damage into existing planning processes, including by including loss and damage human resource capacity in future staffing structures and by requesting short-term TA support
- Area Councils, Village Councils and Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) should be provided with practical guidance materials on how to plan, implement, report on actions to avert, minimise and address loss and damage within their jurisdictions, as well as advocate for national policy and resource allocation reforms.
- All governance systems should strive to further empower locally-led mechanisms to avert, minimise and address loss and damage, especially in ways that elevate the use of traditional knowledge and cultural systems, ensures participatory action, values innovation and operationalises the principle of subsidiarity which holds that loss and damage decision-making authority should be placed where climate impacts and responsibility for outcomes will occur.

- Vanuatu should meet all of its obligations related to the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement and other laws and conventions, including by including and reporting on loss and damage in all subsequent Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs)

Assessment of Loss and Damage

Vanuatu's stakeholders utilise a range of assessment approaches and methodologies to understand and report on the broad range of climate impacts and spectrum of climate risks, although these are not always complementary and data collected is not centrally stored or analysed, making effective planning across sectors and scales challenging.

For example, the Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA)⁹⁹ is a tool commonly employed after major climate or geological disasters, which is led and owned by the government of Vanuatu assisted by a multi-disciplinary, multi-agency team comprising the Pacific Community, UN Agencies, the World Bank and other relevant stakeholders. **The PDNA contains** damage, loss, and macro-economic impacts on the affected economy; Impacts on livelihoods, incomes, and human development; Short, medium, and long-term recovery and reconstruction needs; and, Measures for mainstreaming Disaster Risk Reduction in post-disaster recovery and reconstruction plans. The PDNA has become a near-universal template of assessing net disaster impact.

The National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction has also endorsed a National Vulnerability Assessment Framework¹⁰⁰, which is designed to facilitate a more systematic and robust collation and analysis of existing and forthcoming climate and disaster vulnerability data from multiple sources (stakeholders) and methods (qualitative, quantitative, subjective, objective) to more effectively inform resilience decision-making, planning, project prioritization and financial allocation at national and sub-national levels. Notably, the NVA is explicit about loss and damage in that it is structured to identify how and when which losses to valued objectives could potentially occur in the future and identify ways to determine and invest in loss avoidance strategies. Currently support is underway from the Pacific NDC Hub to operationalise the Framework for decision-making.

An internal database of natural disasters is kept by the National Disaster Management Office and the Vanuatu Meteorology Geohazards Department, while several NAB endorsed climate projects have developed more public facing maps and support tools for climate risks. For example composite hazard maps,¹⁰¹ flood exposure maps,¹⁰² climatology maps,¹⁰³ tropical cyclone hazard maps,¹⁰⁴ and climate futures projections¹⁰⁵.

Individual projects also undertake assessments relevant to climate change, for example the Vanuatu Coastal Adaptation Project¹⁰⁶ and the VanKIRAP adaptation project.¹⁰⁷ In addition, the Department of Local Authorities (DLA) works with provincial and area council governments to enable to ongoing compilation of Community Profiles¹⁰⁸, which include historical climate impacts and projected vulnerabilities.

99 https://dspac.gov.vu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=157&Itemid=573

100 https://www.nab.vu/sites/default/files/documents/Vanuatu%20VAF_finalJune2018a.pdf

101 <https://www.preventionweb.net/publication/vanuatu-composite-hazard-map>

102 <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/5ad01bbd2a8d4413bdeb7ef4dcd1fbb9>

103 <https://www.vmgd.gov.vu/climate/climate-maps>

104 https://risk.spc.int/layers/van_w50_tr:geonode:van_w50_tr

105 <https://vanclimatefutures.gov.vu/dashboard/home#ClimateMapping>

106 https://www.nab.vu/sites/default/files/nab/documents/03/08/2016%20-%2010%3A21/methodology_annex_vcap_community_engagement_2015.pdf

107 <https://vanclimatefutures.gov.vu/assets/docs/Van-KIRAP-Guidance.pdf>

108 <https://tourism.gov.vu/images/DoT-Documents/Presentations/Decentralisation-Proposal-Vision-2030-presentation2020.pdf>

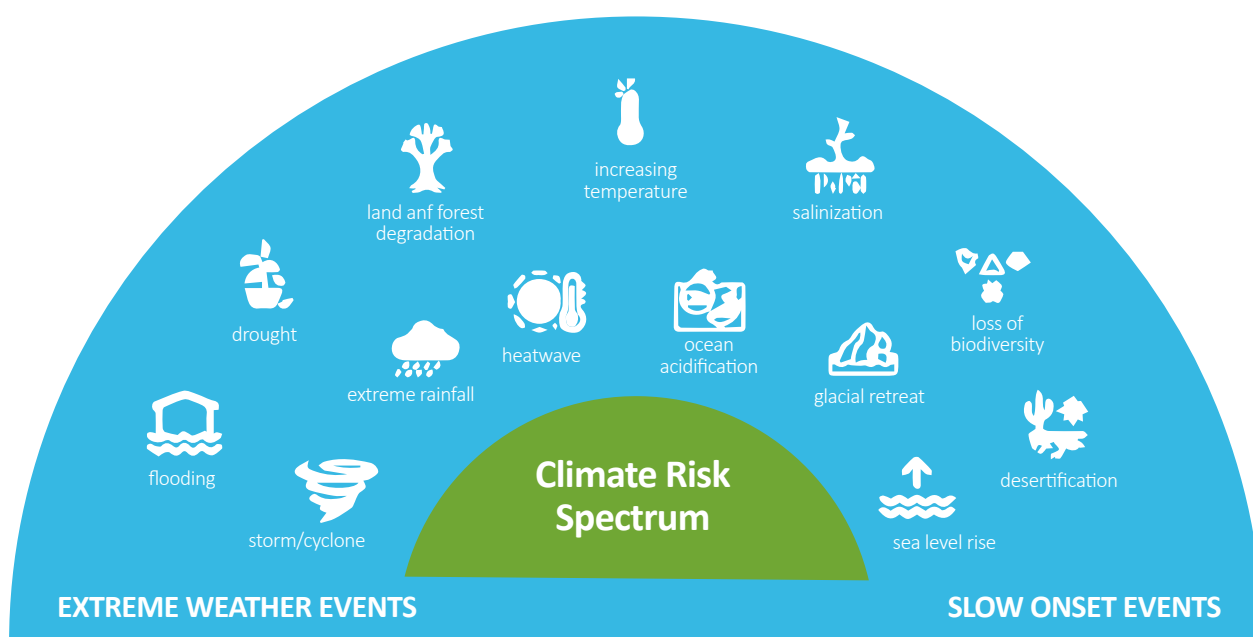
There are also a range of publically available sources of information on Loss & Damage that are useful while full statistical information on loss and damage experienced in Vanuatu is not yet fully available. The following are important sources of information related to efforts to quantify and qualify the scale of loss and damage across the archipelago:

- Vanuatu Bureau of Statistics <https://vbos.gov.vu/>
- DesInventar <https://www.desinventar.net/>
- Emergency Events Database Em-DAT <https://www.emdat.be/>
- SPC PopGIS3 <http://vanuatu.popgis.spc.int>
- SPC Statistics Database https://pacificdata.org/data/organization/spc-sdd?member_countries=vu&tags=population
- Pacific Data GIS Dashboard <https://pacific-data.sprep.org/data-dashboard/gis-spatial-data-dashboard>
- Pacific Map Tool <https://map.pacificdata.org/>
- Allen Coral Atlas <https://allencoralatlas.org/atlas/#6.35/-16.7774/169.1281>
- MacBIO Vanuatu Marine Atlas <http://macbio-pacific.info/Interactive-Atlas/Vanuatu/Vanuatu.html>
- GEOSS Portal <https://www.geoportal.org/>
- UNDRR Disaster losses and damages tracking DLDT <https://www.undrr.org/building-risk-knowledge/disaster-losses-and-damages-tracking-system-dldt>
- Coastal Risk Screening Tool <https://coastal.climatecentral.org/>
- Global Drought Information System <https://gdis-noaa.hub.arcgis.com/>
- NOAA 7 Day Rainfall Totals https://www.ospo.noaa.gov/products/atmosphere/ghe/ghe_loops.html?Imap=G&Itype=D&Inum=7?Imap=G&Itype=D&Inum=7
- Resource Watch Projections and Real Time <https://resourcewatch.org/data/explore?section=All+data&selectedCollection=&zoo m=6&lat=-17.235595646905544&lng=169.2932846966893&>
- NASA Sea Level Projection Tool <https://sealevel.nasa.gov/ipcc-ar6-sea-level-projection-tool>



- NASA world view visualiser <https://worldview.earthdata.nasa.gov/>
- NOAA The Global Forecast System (GFS) <https://www.ncei.noaa.gov/products/weather-climate-models/global-forecast>
- SEDAC Hazards Mapper <https://sedac.ciesin.columbia.edu/mapping/hazards/#>
- Copernicus Global Flood Awareness System (GloFAS): <https://global-flood.emergency.copernicus.eu/>
- Global Forest Watch Deforestation Database <https://www.globalforestwatch.org/dashboards/country/VUT/>
- World Environment Situation Room (WESR) https://wesr.unepgrid.ch/?project=MX-XVK-HPH-OGN-HVE-GGN&language=en&theme=color_light
- World Bank Open Data <https://data.worldbank.org/country/vanuatu>
- World Bank Climate Knowledge Portal <https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/vanuatu>
- OCHA Humanitarian Data Exchange HDX Vanuatu data sources https://data.humdata.org/search?q=vanuatu&ext_search_source=main-nav
- Global Drought Observatory <https://drought.emergency.copernicus.eu/tumbo/gdo/map/?id=2000>
- GRID Data Analytics and Early Warning for Environment <https://early-warning.unepgrid.ch/>
- MapX visualising geospatial data on natural resources https://app.mapx.org/?theme=color_light&project=MX-YBJ-YYF-08R-UUR-QW6&language=en
- WHO Global Health Observatory <https://data.who.int/countries/548>
- UNDP Human Development Indicators <https://hdr.undp.org/data-center/specific-country-data#/countries/VUT>
- Glide Disaster Search <https://glidenumber.net/glide/public/search/search.jsp>
- ND-GAIN Vulnerability Index <https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/rankings/>
- Tropical Cyclone Database https://sharaku.eorc.jaxa.jp/TYP_DB/index_e.html
- Global Disaster Alert and Coordination System <https://gdacs.org/>
- Coastal Futures projections <https://coastal-futures.org/>





It is clear that a centralised, complementary and open-access national system is required to collectively analyse and support decision making on climate loss and damage. For this reason, the government recently launched a Statistical development plan for Vanuatu disaster-related statistics 2024–2028 to coordinate, collate, produce, and disseminate quality and timely disaster-related statistical information for managing and reporting on the risk, occurrence, and impact of major disasters in Vanuatu¹⁰⁹ with additional support from Pacific Community’s (SPC) new loss and damage programmes funded by the Danish Government¹¹⁰ to collect data on climate impacts and loss and damage.

109 <https://vbos.gov.vu/sites/default/files/NSDS%3B%20Disaster%20Related%20Statistics%202024-2028.pdf>

110 <https://openaid.um.dk/project/XM-DAC-3-1-288689?appBasePath=projects>

Policy Priorities

1

Develop and implement a comprehensive and centralised National hazardous event, disaster and climate loss and damage monitoring and reporting system that:

- operationalises the National Vulnerability Assessment Framework,
- is, to the maximum extent possible, free and open accesses for use by all types of stakeholders
- is able to disaggregate losses and damages at local scales,
- considers real and potential risks posed by multiple hazards that could occur simultaneously or in sequence, taking into account how these hazards might interact with each other to create a more significant impact (rather than analysing each hazard individually).
- is able to extend the losses and damages data value chain by linking weather, observations, climate patterns and hazardous events with related impacts/ losses and damages information and their cascading impacts to support improved analytical options, refined impact thresholds and enabled data use
- captures short, medium and long-term impacts
- prioritises the inclusion of traditional knowledge as well as intangible and non-economic impacts
- assesses the impacts from slow onset events, and their interaction with extreme events
- incorporates and links global open-access risk assessments and remote sensing to local level data databases to local level
- incorporates citizen science and social media-based or online reporting by CDCCCs and other first responders on the ground
- is linked to multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWSs)
- allows for explanatory and contextual notes in narrative form, conveying the impacts and losses experienced beyond just a number
- recognizes that tracking past losses helps with future decision making
- ensures full complementarity with, at minimum, the enhanced data systems to be utilised by the National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs), the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department (VMGD) the National Statistics Office (NSOs), and the Department of Local Authorities (DLA)
- is fully interoperable with international systems such as
 - the new hazardous event and disaster losses and damages tracking system (DTS) being developed with UNDRR¹¹¹ that is synergized with the WMO-approved Cataloguing Hazardous Event (CHE) methodology¹¹²
 - the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index¹¹³ being developed by the UN OHRLS that assesses vulnerability from all three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, environmental, social) to give a more realistic picture of risk,
 - the Post Disaster Needs Assessment approach¹¹⁴,
 - the FAO methodology for damage and loss assessment in agriculture¹¹⁵ and others.
 - is housed on a secure, cloud-based system that ensures real-time data collection and encrypted storage with regular cybersecurity audits, data backup protocols, and compliance with international data protection standards to safeguard sensitive climate impact information while enabling transparent reporting and evidence-based decision-making

2

Mandate a department or taskforce within the Ministry of Climate Change or the Prime Minister's Office to take the lead on coordinating national loss and damage assessment and reporting systems

111 <https://www.undrr.org/building-risk-knowledge/disaster-losses-and-damages-tracking-system-dldt>

112 https://meetings.wmo.int/EC-76/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7b40cec1da-2380-4eb7-aa45-08e29c3fe8ea%7d&action=default

113 <https://www.un.org/ohrrls/mvi>

114 https://dspac.gov.vu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=157&Itemid=573

115 <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/5bc863c3-618d-48c8-92ce-26842444855f>

3

Design new and enhanced loss and damage assessment approaches and methodologies to address specific use-cases and tangible decision-making needs, including for example, the determination of financial, technical and capacity needs to address loss and damage in a specific geographical area or estimating long-term non-economic impacts and solution options for slow onset impacts

4

Develop a range of indicators and metrics that appropriately capture the range of losses and damages suffered by all social, economic and environmental systems in Vanuatu at all levels and can

- accurately assess and report the impacts of climate change across various sectors, levels and timeframes
- be based on Vanuatu stakeholder-derived benchmarking of what constitutes acceptable, tolerable, and intolerable risks
- align with the latest international approaches¹¹⁶
- include core indicators as well as customizable indicators for issue specific tracking with various dimensions and alternatives
- serve multiple uses, including supporting decision-making for adaptation, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development, for example aligned with the UAE-Belem Work Program on Adaptation Indicators¹¹⁷
- do not duplicate existing indicators, or result in undue data collection assessment
- be comparable (not necessarily identical) such that Vanuatu's indicators can also respect contextual differences

5

Ensure that all climate impact assessments undertaken currently and in the future

- prioritise the collection and use of fine resolution data particularly for information at the scale of local communities
- include traditional knowledge as well as intangible and non-economic impacts
- capture past and present risks alongside projected future climate risks in order to enable beneficiaries to consider a range of risk scenarios
- cover an entire risk spectrum across rapid onset extreme weather events and slow onset processes, and the interplay between them, including over medium to long time scales
- are multihazard, and able to capture the interplay between climate and non-climate risk, especially losses and damages exacerbated, compounded and intensified by geological events
- integrate uncertainty analysis by adopting scenario-based modelling and probabilistic assessments to capture a range of possible climate impacts, ensure flexible policy responses, enable iterative monitoring, and promote adaptive management strategies that account for evolving climate science, data limitations, and the complex nature of slow-onset and extreme events
- include both economic and non-economic impacts, and the interplay between them
- are participatory, and allow government and non government entities, as well as women and girls, people with disabilities, youth and children, the elderly, members of the LGBTQI+ community and other marginalized groups to input their experiences, perspectives and ambitions

¹¹⁶ <https://www.undrr.org/media/101946/download?startDownload=20250209>

¹¹⁷ <https://unfccc.int/documents/640965>

6

Wherever possible, integrate and mainstream loss and damage assessments into the existing assessment methodologies, nation-wide surveys and the M&E approaches used in climate and development projects and other processes

7

Based on the assessments undertaken report on the current and projected loss and damage into all key national documents, including, for example, the Annual Development Report, the Biennial Transparency Report to the UNFCCC, the Universal Periodic Review Reports to the UNHRC

8

Prepare and publish an annual Vanuatu Loss and Damage Gap Report on the occurrence, impacts, solutions, finance needed and provided, and policy innovations being used throughout Vanuatu to avert, minimise and address loss and damage and to

-
- enhance understanding of risk management approaches, strengthen stakeholder dialogue, and enhance action and support by providing concrete data and analysis on loss and damage trends and gaps.
 - serve to make the best available information to programme funding and interventions to avert, minimise and address loss and damage.
 - Provide evidence-based guidance to the Parliament, COM and the NAB on where new and emerging resourcing is required, and on how to programme limited government resources within the wider loss and damage funding arrangements
 - aggregating financial needs for addressing loss and damage L&D, and how these needs continue to evolve over time and with increasing temperature
 - propose options and solutions for closing loss and damage financing gaps, in particular with new and additional sources of finance, and through fit for purpose and innovative disbursement modalities.
 - identifying promising and innovative policy options undertaken to respond to extreme climate events as well as to non-economic and slow onset losses and damages, including links to new national and subnational L&D policies and frameworks
 - update institutional and stakeholder mapping, including local organisations, bodies, networks and experts involved in L&D solutions at different levels and across sectors
 - clarify current understanding on limits to adaptation, and how adaptation actions can also serve to address loss and damage in some instances.
 - summarise research activities and key findings including highlighting research gaps and priorities
 - index data, methodologies and approaches being used by various stakeholders and at different levels to assess, monitor and analyse loss and damage,
 - utilise attribution science to assign responsibility for the losses and damages suffered by Vanuatu
 - include case studies of real impacts, solutions and lessons learned from the actions being employed by Vanuatu stakeholders to address loss and damage
 - refine the Vanuatu loss and damage conceptual framework, definition and typology of actions presented in this Policy Framework

Programmatic Approach to Address Loss and Damage

Given the highly complex and interrelated nature of loss and damage, it is the policy of the Government of Vanuatu that planning for, addressing and reporting on residual climate impacts must be undertaken through long-term nationally-determined programmatic approaches, as opposed to short term since sector projects.

For the purposes of this Loss and Damage Policy, a programme is a strategic, long-term initiative that consists of multiple interrelated initiatives across sectors and at multiple levels aimed at achieving overarching goals, and fully aligned with national policies and sectoral strategies. It provides for enhanced coordination, efficiency, sustainability and long-term impact.

A project, in contrast, is a narrow, often short-term intervention that often operates in isolation, focusing on specific deliverables without necessarily addressing systemic challenges. Projects risk being fragmented, short-sighted, or duplicative when not properly integrated within a larger strategic vision.

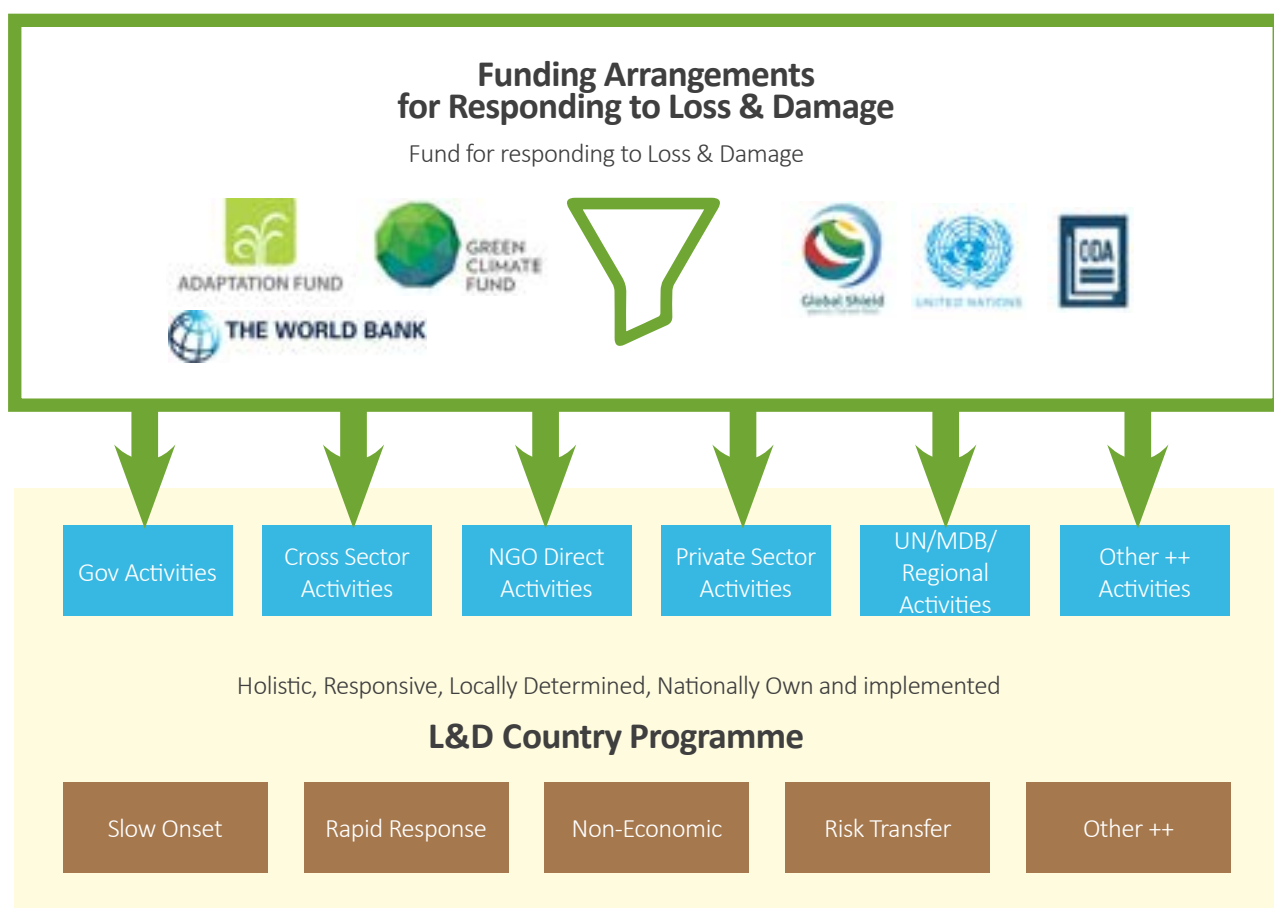
As part of its international support to the design of the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage (FRLD) Vanuatu co-authored a submission on ‘nationally-determined programmatic approaches’¹¹⁸ making the case that programmatic approaches can:

1. be more responsive to differing needs and circumstances given that the intensifying and cascading impacts of climate change are compounding existing development challenges and require longer-term, holistic, and cross-sectoral efforts. Programmes can be designed to respond to a range of different contexts and needs that are responsive to localised priorities and reflect the diversity of considerations needed to effectively address and manage loss and damage in different locations and circumstances.
2. enable the national determination of priorities and needs is paramount to ensure ownership, and enable the range of locally appropriate modalities, support solutions, systems that are developed and tailor-made at the national level for end users. National determination builds on and strengthens legal frameworks and the context-specific analytical tools needed to address loss and damage scenarios experienced in specific national circumstances. The Vanuatu government has the legal mandate and contextual understanding required to address loss and damage in a responsive and culturally appropriate manner, and so can facilitate the development of priorities in a bottom up approach. The determination of loss and damage priorities at the national level, including their alignment with policy and national structures, is crucial to ensuring effectiveness, national ownership and sustainability.
3. support long-term planning, as opposed to short-term projects which often run parallel to the long-term operations of the Vanuatu Government and the planning of civil society and other national stakeholders. Addressing loss and damage requires ongoing and robust planning, implementation and reporting arrangements. To address and respond to the evolving nature of loss and damage in a given context in Vanuatu, the government will require more comprehensive or “programmatic” solutions that are well aligned with efforts to mitigate GHG emissions and adapt to changes (avert and minimise loss and damage)
4. prioritize national systems including by investing in delivery systems and national capacity to deliver solutions over time versus temporary project-based implementation arrangements (i.e. third party management and administration, project development units, and short term technical assistance. The use of national systems for the planning, implementation and reporting on actions to address loss and damage will provide efficiency over time, reducing reliance on external administration and the associated financial costs and management fees, and in so doing will maximise the benefit that reaches end users. Key aspects of addressing loss and damage – such as the complex slow-onset impacts, non-economic loss and damage, and migration – cannot effectively be considered in isolation due to the inextricable linkages to broader resilient development planning and social protection mandates of Government. Thus, the use of national systems where possible (noting situations in which this may not be possible or appropriate) is the most efficient and effective way to ensure loss and damage action creates the impact it is intended to produce. Once a decision is made to prioritise national systems, Government will be incentivised to invest in the development and strengthening of these systems and mechanisms if the main sources of loss and damage financing are deployed through them and these existing systems are proved to have functional equivalence to the safeguards, fiduciary standards, and reporting

118 <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Final%20update%20Pacific%20Programmatic%20approach%20for%20Loss%20and%20Damage%20Fund.pdf>

requirements expected in relation to international financing best practice.

5. incentivises the development and use of diverse national modalities for addressing loss and damage, which can be strengthened, reshaped, or where non-existent- established, to channel action and support for specific loss and damage interventions. Experience demonstrates that top-down project-based solutions are often not locally acceptable, and create unhelpful burdens and produce administrative bottlenecks that slow implementation and limit implementation effectiveness. The ability to programme diverse modalities and acknowledge their local legitimacy is crucial to ensuring that loss and damage solutions operate within and under national policies, laws, regulations, and monitoring and evaluation systems. Nationally-determined programmes can ensure the consideration, support and utilisation of nationally- determined modalities.
6. develops human capacity development as an essential factor of sustainability and the effective local implantation of loss and damage solutions. Given limited resources, programmatic approaches can bring complementarity and efficiency to recruitment, remuneration, and upskilling required to support implementation. Human resources for this purpose can be integrated into national systems rather than isolated projects which lose valuable human assets and knowledge at the end of the short term cycle
7. pools and streamlines resources across various funding arrangements to maximise outcomes and impact to avert, minimise and address loss and damage



Vanuatu should develop and implement a long-term (at least 10 years) Loss and Damage Programme and Investment Framework Document providing:

- A minimum 15-year timeframe with a phased approach e.g. five-year phases
- details on the nature and scope of the loss and damage scenario(s) to which a programmatic response is required;
- the proposed modality, action, policy, or plan(s) for addressing the scenario in question;
- the scope of the programme and the target results and outcomes it will create;
- detail on the sustainability and effectiveness of the programme and its associated initiatives;
- evidence of the readiness to implement the programme and / or details of related projects or technical assistance in place to support implementation
- a clear articulation of unfolding nature of the risk, uncertainty in how risk and responses will be matched in the future, and the need to take an adaptive programming approach.
- details on a bottom-up ownership approach i.e. local – provincial – national, such that Government pursues a decentralised approach of identifying L&D actions and subsequent funding mechanisms will be undertaken, in-line with the Government of Vanuatu's decentralisation priorities while emphasising locally led and decentralised approaches
- incorporation of regional and international experiences and lessons learned
- guidance on how multi-level actions will be delivered to cover unavoided and unavoidable losses and damages that are beyond the response capacity of the local communities and local governments.
- be inclusive across all levels (i.e. local, provincial, national) and involve the participation of representatives across all stakeholder groups (i.e. government, private sector, academia, NGOs, CSOs and development partners).
- provides a comprehensive consideration of the full L&D financing landscape, with a goal to achieve coherence and complementarity among diverse funding arrangements as well as innovative sources of finance
- ensures the inclusion of traditional knowledge (TK), environmental and social safeguards and a gender, equality, diversity and social inclusion lens.
- ensures the strong interconnectedness between loss and damage – and adaptation,
- humanitarian and disaster relief (e.g. preparation, anticipation, response and recovery cycle) -acknowledging that loss and damage can have entry points at each of these stages.



The Loss and Damage Programme and Investment Framework should:

- be country-owned and build on national priorities;
- enable existing national systems to incorporate long term programming for addressing loss and damage into the context of national and regional planning frameworks;
- be informed by an open, representative and transparent process of multi stakeholder dialogue, ensuring public involvement acknowledging that many different actors, nationally and internationally, share roles and responsibilities for addressing loss and damage that will occur now and in the future;
- outline realistic programme goals, objectives, and a set of indicative activities that have causal links (through a theory of change) to outcomes that directly address loss and damage experienced in its most direct and localised form;
- have sufficient detail to ensure there is trust and confidence that on-budget finance will be spent effectively and efficiently, adhering to internationally-recognised standards and safeguards
- be result oriented, including a justification of robust and functionally equivalent national monitoring and evaluation systems.
- outline the complementarity of a range of relevant processes and financing sources, including for GHG mitigation, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action, risk transfer processes, and sustainable development initiatives
- outline the most appropriate new or existing arrangements / national funds / financial management systems available or in development that would be prioritised for receiving flows of loss and damage finance (which may include contributions to existing Trust Funds, regional agencies, civil society, private sector, etc).
- describe the programme governance mechanism which is tailored to fit the unique circumstances and including a risk management framework to comprehensively demonstrate the functional equivalency of existing or new systems to implement and govern the programme, uphold safeguards, monitor and evaluate progress as well as systems to mitigate potential risks
- provide a clear articulation of monitoring and reporting processes, such as assurance that programmatic, financial and risk management reports would be completed / updated on a yearly basis by the Government, potentially with technical assistance from international sources (e.g. the Santiago Network, the Pacific Community etc)
- allow for exceptional circumstances which could trigger more frequent updates within a year (such as changing security risks, exposure to climate and economic shocks or emerging social challenges), with reviews may result in adjustments to the programme as necessary.
- integrates anticipatory action and uncertainty management, for example by linking programmatic action to early warning systems, climate risk modelling, and proactive financial mechanisms as well as including community-led preparedness, pre-arranged financing (e.g., parametric insurance and contingency funds), and flexible response strategies that account for scientific uncertainty and evolving climate risks
- promotes co-financing, pooling and streamlining of resources across various funding arrangements to maximise outcomes and overall impact to avert, minimise and address loss and damage

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Governance of the Loss & Damage Programme Framework should be stewarded by the National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction, with strong co-ownership by other units within the Ministry of Climate Change, the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management

The Programme should be reviewed and updated annually, or more frequently as evolving contexts require

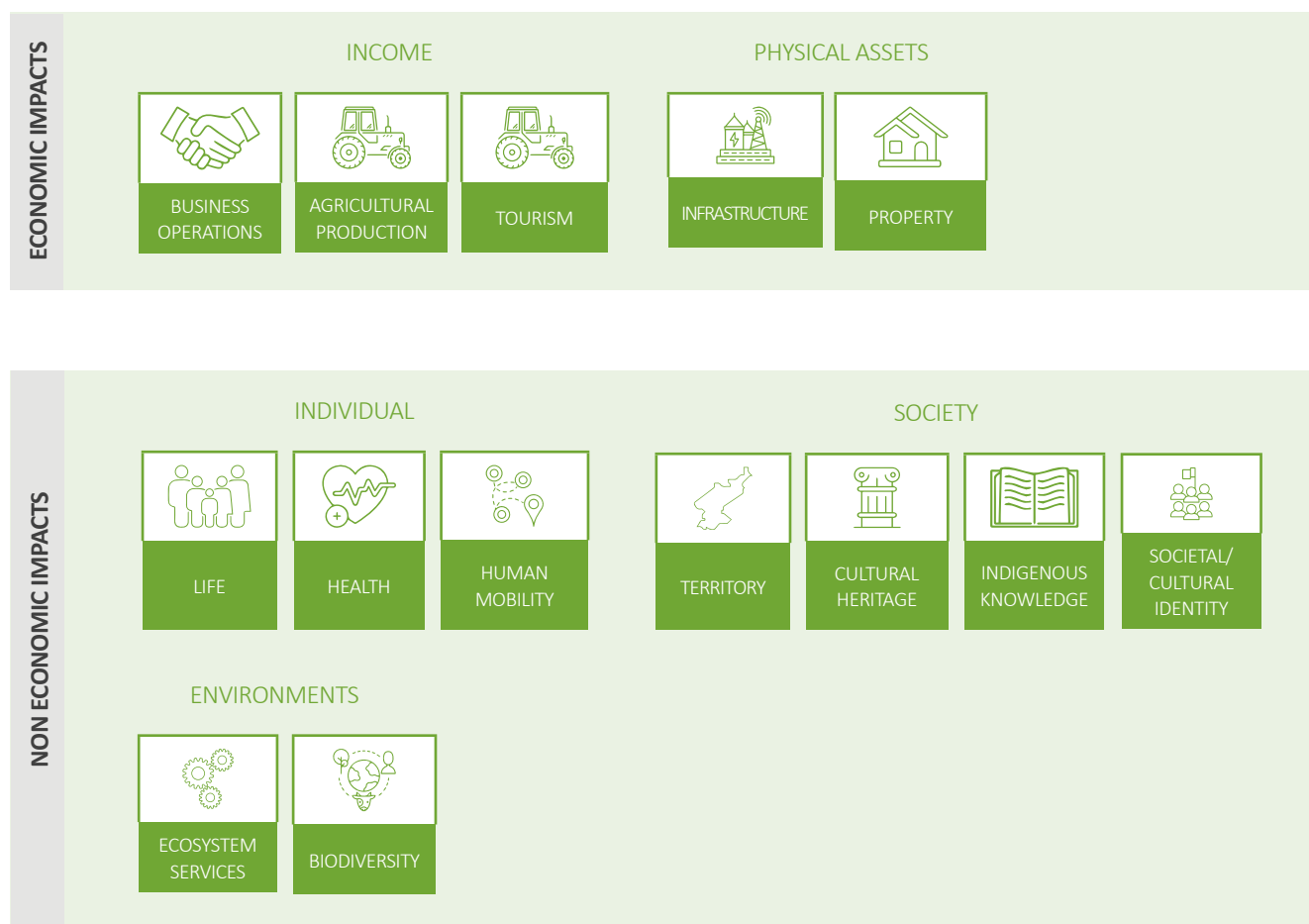
Economic and Non-Economic Loss and Damage

Climate Impacts affect resources, goods, services in Vanuatu that can be traded in markets (economic) as well as intangible assets that cannot be easily bought or sold (non economic).

The Loss & Damage Policy aims to ensure that no impacts are left unacknowledged, especially those that are invaluable to ni-Vanuatu contexts, including for example;

- Livelihoods and Health
- Culture and Customs
- Ecosystems
- Identity and Human Rights

The government aims to ensure that all impacts can be addressed, including on tangible and intangible on items, systems and concepts locally determined by our people to hold value to them.



Policy Priorities

1

Commit to ensuring a balanced and dual-track consideration of economic and non-economic loss and damage impacts in all climate related assessments, programmes, initiatives and funding arrangements, including by

- acknowledging that 'economic' L&D can cascade into 'non-economic' impacts and vice versa, requiring integrated solutions
- acknowledging the context-dependant nature of non-economic effects, and the potentially infinite number of ways people can subjectively experience these impacts
- considering how both economic and non economic effects can lead to other indirect impacts such as psychosocial and mental health issues including anxiety, stress, sadness, insomnia, and depression.
- considering and developing new methodologies and approaches that assign value to non-economic or intangible losses, for greater visibility and action with stakeholders who primarily utilize monetary estimations in their work (e.g. donors and financial institutions)
- accepting that valuation of loss and damage is not purely utilitarian, and may be heavily based on existence, cultural identity or spirituality

2

Require that relevant instruments and methodologies, for example impact assessments, disaster recovery plans, and adaptation strategies, all explicitly account for non-economic loss and damage

3

Design and implement a national climate impact database that systematically collects, verifies, and archives data on both quantifiable economic effects (e.g., GDP impact, asset destruction) and non-economic intangible losses (e.g., psychological trauma, biodiversity decline, loss of traditional knowledge). This database should be

- cloud-based
- interoperable across government agencies (building on the databases already existing within the NDMO and VMGD)
- accessible to researchers and policymakers, ensuring data is standardized, georeferenced
- updated in real time
- incorporate community-led reporting mechanisms
- include traditional knowledge and cultural content
- support evidence-based decision-making

4

Develop a linked databases of how affected communities can and have responded to economic and non-economic loss and damage, and the costs of these actions, in a way that complements estimates of financial, capacity and technology needs. The strategies included in this database should include estimates of time requirements that are aligned to the duration of the impacts (potentially forever with no definitive end point in the case of sea level rise or salinification of ground water).

5

Ensure that communities give free, prior and informed consent regarding their provisions of impacts data, and maintain full ownership over the documentation of, and interpretation of, economic and non-economic impacts that affect them and solutions to address them

6

Integrate actions to address non-economic loss and damage and fill gaps on intangible impacts into existing strategies to address climate impacts where there are clear opportunities and needs

7

Ensure dedicated funding streams are available for both economic recovery (e.g., rebuilding infrastructure) and non-economic restoration (e.g., cultural heritage protection, mental health support).

8

Integrate non-economic loss and damage concepts are into national education programs, including in the formal and informal sector, and in dedicated training for climate and development decision-makers, community leaders, and policymakers



Extreme, Rapid and Slow-Onset Events

Losses and Damages can occur rapidly or slowly, and across the temporal scale of climate hazards affecting Vanuatu.

Vanuatu aims for a comprehensive, forward-looking policy approach to addressing loss and damage from both extreme events (such as cyclones, floods, and wildfires) and slow-onset events (such as sea-level rise, ocean acidification, and ecosystem degradation). While extreme events cause sudden, visible destruction with immediate economic and humanitarian costs, slow-onset events gradually erode livelihoods, cultures, and ecosystems, often leading to irreversible consequences.

Effective governance requires integrated approaches that ensure both forms of climate impacts are equitably addressed and Vanuatu's social, economic and environmental development goals are protected from the full spectrum of climate-induced loss and damage.

The Loss & Damage Policy aims to enable a hybridized and coordinated approach to equitably and adequately address Hazards that occur over different time scales, and re-balance the action space to be most relevant to local livelihoods and sustainable development aspirations.



1. temporal scale over which they occur 2. differing speed of manifestation of their impacts

Policy Priorities

1

Commit to ensuring a balanced and dual-track consideration of extreme and slow onset events in all climate related assessments, programmes, initiatives and funding arrangements, including by

- balancing resource allocations to address both extreme and slow onset impacts
- ensuring slow-onset processes, such as sea level rise, are mainstreamed into climate change and disaster risk management plans at all levels
- ensuring monitoring systems to fill existing gaps in assessing slow-onset hazards are widely used, with actions taken in response
- considering new triggers for action and support related to climate impacts that occur or manifest slowly
- requiring that climate and disaster response strategies consider both short-term actions as well as long-term solutions, ensuring that effort and resources are not disproportionately allocated to high-visibility extreme events.

2

Develop sector and island specific solutions to address slow onset climate hazards, including at different levels of impact

3

Ensure communities are empowered to develop rights-based loss and damage strategies and plans, which account for addressing both sudden impacts and those that require long-term response

4

Facilitate experience sharing and lessons learned events, fora and capacity development opportunities to build an understanding of diverse ways to address slow onset impacts

5

Facilitate the participatory design of solutions that can simultaneously respond to both slow and rapid onset impacts (win win) including by:

- enhancing Early Warning and Forecasting Systems , including meteorological monitoring and long-term climate modelling to anticipate both immediate hazards (e.g., storms, droughts) and gradual environmental shifts (e.g., forest degradation, changing rainfall patterns).
- prioritising Nature-Based Solutions that are able to respond to rapid onset loss and damage as well as long-term environmental degradation, and able to balance the reduction of both immediate and gradual risks.
- proactively designing new and innovative initiatives that specifically address slow-onset processes
- identify scenarios where impacts may see tipping points or phase/regime shifts, requiring new, additional or innovative action

6

Develop tools and methodologies accessible to members of Parliament, COM, the NAB and public service commission directors general and directors to ensure that they are undertaking decision making in the face of uncertainty including over the range of projected climatic changes, both related to extreme events and slow onset processes, including taking into consideration the costs, and implications of no action

7

Develop marketing and promotional strategies to enhance slow onset primacy in the minds of the media, politicians and aid agencies to prevent problem fatigue and the risk of these impacts becoming forgotten disasters

8

Ensure dedicated funding streams are available for programmatic actions to address both extreme events and slow onset impacts



Locally Led Action and Traditional Knowledge to Address Loss & Damage

The biggest challenge Vanuatu will face will be to implement actions that address the painful and often traumatic losses and damages. Often there is no positive aspect to work on addressing loss and damage, but it will involve a range of non-ideal and undesirable options. For this reason, it becomes critically important for those suffering the impacts to drive their own response, and utilize all available traditional and cultural knowledge to do so.

Locally led loss and damage action is a process that gives local actors the power to make decisions about climate loss and damage, and different from other approaches because it gives local actors agency, rather than just involving them in the process. Vanuatu is unique in the world given its incredibly diverse and intact traditional and cultural knowledge systems, many of which have been derived in the context of, and in order to cope with, climate variability.

The current flow of financial resources, economic models and power dynamics within the climate action space – between those who hold the funds and the recipients of those funds – are failing to adequately address the escalating and intersecting crises of climate change, biodiversity degradation and inequalities that impact the lives and livelihoods of people and communities. Traditional and cultural coping strategies are commonly sidelined in climate solution spaces, which are heavily biased towards Western understanding and modern knowledge systems.

Not only are resources, action and support to address loss and damage inadequate, but loss and damage decisions are often made far away from local contexts, missing vital insights and innovation, traditional solutions and risking the promotion of inappropriate solutions that waste money, resources and time.

The Loss & Damage Policy acknowledges that traditional authorities, cultural representatives, area councils, communities, local groups, households and individuals should have full agency to define, prioritise, design, monitor and evaluate actions to address loss and damage, with support from higher levels. This means a greater role for traditional and cultural governance systems as well as formal and informal organisations that are composed of or directly accountable to local people because they are already connected and accountable to local people. Traditional and locally led leadership can help resolve trade-offs and conflict between communities, strengthen local actors' capabilities, support local actors to consider climate risks over different timescales, build upon cultural resilience, help shift local incentives to make more sustainable choices, and can cost-effectively, and with cultural sensitivity, aggregate local actions to address loss and damage at scale.

The Loss & Damage Policy aims to empower those in Vanuatu who are directly experiencing impacts to build upon and strengthen cultural practices, to lead and self-determine their own pathways to address losses and damages

Policy Priorities: Locally Led Action and Traditional Knowledge to Address Loss & Damage

1

The Government of Vanuatu will endorse a set of principles to guide the planning, implementation and monitoring of locally led loss and damage action, including by

- Prioritising traditional knowledge and cultural systems
- Undertaking widespread consultation with those currently addressing loss and damage at the household, village, community, area council, island, and provincial levels and by non government, civil society, traditional, faith-based and other groupings
- Being guided by the internationally-accepted Principles for Locally Led Adaptation (LLA)¹¹⁹
- Undertaking cost-benefit analysis of the efficiency and impact of locally led and traditionally-grounded versus top down and Western-biased action to address loss and damage

2

The Government will comment to enabling action to address loss and damage that meets these principles, including by ensuring, at minimum, that national loss and damage decision-making is

- locally determined and driven
- based on equity and justice
- grounded in custom and culture
- acknowledges traditional knowledge
- builds on existing adaptation, DRR, humanitarian and other national response systems
- meets obligations related to human rights
- beneficial (not harmful or averse) to the items, systems and concepts locally determined by Vanuatu's people to hold value
- contains safeguards and protections for vulnerable groups and those most at-risk
- enhances complementary, coordination and coherence among governance systems at all levels
- recognizes that that responses to impacts often depends on local ecosystems and natural resources, which are themselves rapidly degrading due to climate change

3

Develop regulations, including redress and compliance mechanisms, to ensure that self-determination and subsidiarity (action and decision-making takes place at the level where impacts are being manifested) are maintained in all loss and damage activities in Vanuatu, especially so that affected individuals and groups (including traditional, customary and tribal groups) autonomously formulate their own responses to losses and damages

4

Establish a transparent and inclusive system for making and communicating decisions by higher levels of governance that involve difficult tradeoffs, acknowledging that solutions will often require decisions that do not have net beneficial outcomes as they will necessarily need to incorporate some degree of unavoidable residual loss and damage

119 <https://www.iied.org/introduction-locally-led-adaptation>

5

Develop a tracking system for monitoring how locally-led L&D responses and impacts evolve over time to better understand the mechanics of these processes at different levels, and the effectiveness of actions and resource flows

6

Promote at all levels, the traditional knowledge and cultural practices used and available to address loss and damage



Climate Displacement, Relocation and Human Mobility

Vanuatu's Loss & Damage Policy aims to align to and enable the full implementation of Vanuatu's revised National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement (NPCCDIP), which seeks to support and protect persons who, for reasons of sudden or progressive changes in the climate system, that adversely affect their lives or living conditions, are obliged to leave their habitual homes, or choose to do so, either temporarily or permanently. It also aims to support and protect people at-risk of displacement, including internal migrants and/or persons who choose to or are required to relocate, as well as host communities providing support to these population groups.

To assure, full complementarily, this Loss & Damage Policy organises its high level climate displacement, relocation and human mobility policy directives in the same structure of the four NPCCDIP "systems level" strategic areas (institutions and governance, evidence, information and monitoring, safeguards and protection, and capacity building, training and resources) and eight "sectoral-level" strategic areas (safety and security, land, housing, planning and environment, health, nutrition and psycho-social well-being, education, infrastructure and connectivity, agriculture, food security and livelihoods, traditional knowledge, culture and documentation, access to justice and public participation) to address displacement and establish durable solutions. More detailed and displacement-specific policy directives can be found in the revised National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement (NPCCDIP).



1

Strengthen institutional and governance arrangements to address climate-induced displacement, including by

- Identifying a lead Ministry to act as focal point and coordinating entity for all matters relating to climate displacement, internal migration human mobility and relocation
- Establishing and legislating arrangements for responding to requests from people affected by displacement, including through a coordination approach among other institutions and organisations working on climate displacement issues, in order to support both displaced individuals and host populations
- Ensuring the participation of and roles for local communities, Chiefs, women's representatives, faith-based groups and vulnerable and minority groups in institutional arrangements and decision making processes.
- Strengthening Provincial and Area level coordination for implementation, acknowledging that Provincial Disaster and Climate Change Committees (PDCCCs) and Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) should take a lead role in responding to displacement concerns at the local level.
- Enhancing and expanding the work of the NAB taskforce on climate displacement

2

Utilise evidence-based approaches for addressing displacement through multihazards mapping and improved data collection and monitoring, including by

- Ensuring that multi-hazards mapping underpins planning for climate displacement and relocation, and enhancing existing multihazard mapping initiatives with gender-inclusive participatory methodologies and integrating traditional and local knowledge
- Establishing a climate displacement tracking mechanism to monitor population mobility in all stages of displacement and produce regular summary reports on the status of climate displacement in all provinces and area councils

3

Develop safeguards guidelines and standard operating procedures (SoPs) to ensure common standards for protection of all people affected by climate displacement, including by

- Developing climate displacement and relocation safeguards, guidelines and SoPs that are community-led, participatory and reflect the needs of affected communities
- Prioritising the safe and timely return and reintegration of displaced individuals to places of origin
- Supporting local integration for people who have been evacuated and are not able to return home where it has been agreed through a consultative, voluntary and informed process that the community will be displaced for a significant time period or permanently and will need to integrate locally.

Increase capacity-building and training for all stakeholders to promote understanding of and sensitivity to displacement issues, including my

- Developing and running trainings for community, provincial, non-government, and other stakeholders on durable solutions related to climate displacement, return to home lands, local integration when return is not possible, relocation planning process and land law.
- Compiling useful resources and case studies for chiefs, mediators, women representatives, pastors, and other community members to improve their engagement in displacement and relocation support, while also sharing Vanuatu lessons learned and experiences with other Pacific and global communities facing climate displacement challenges
- Creating voluntary mentoring arrangements among leaders, displaced peoples, supporting agencies and experts to enhance the flow of knowledge about addressing climate displacement challenges
- Ensuring through policy and legislation that displacement and relocation occur only as a last resort, and should be avoided unless all other alternatives have been explored and it is considered absolutely necessary
- Preparing for a potential future in which there is mass climate displacement from another Pacific island country, or whole islands in Vanuatu and the Government decides to receive and provide support for a mass influx of people.

Ensure the safety and security of all people affected by climate displacement, including migrants and host communities, including by

- Ensuring access to critical, essential and emergency services (police, security assistance, justice, without discrimination, gender and protection, physical planning, , disaster preparedness, climate adaptation, emergency relief and social services) including for displaced populations, at-risk populations, populations returning to places of origin, populations that are integrating locally, relocated populations, internal migrants and host communities.

Incorporate climate displacement and relocation considerations into land management, housing, and environmental planning, including by

- Mapping safe, suitable and available land and housing, in conjunction with multi-hazards national risk maps and broader infrastructure and environmental planning controls, that fully take into account community preferences, proximity to previous locations, customary boundaries, access to natural resources, sources of traditional livelihoods, markets and urban centres, suitability of land for gardening, accessibility of water, electricity, transportation, education and health services, and the protection of environmentally-sensitive land
- Promoting innovative, community-led processes for negotiating new land arrangements, supported by local government and traditional authorities
- Exploring and sensitively undertaking peaceful and voluntary land acquisition arrangements for displaced individuals in consultation with custom landholders and traditional authorities
- Increasing government budget for acquisition of land in the “public interest” to be utilised to address climate displacement
- Developing affordable, climate/disaster-resilient housing designs (for both temporary and long-term accommodation) that is culturally appropriate and meets the needs of communities involved, private investors and development partners, ensuring that community control over building and design of housing is critical and traditional climate/disaster-resilient architecture should be supported where appropriate, whilst improving the technical aspects of buildings to promote disaster-resilience in both urban centres and in rural contexts.
- Ensuring that all shelter options are gender responsive, so that all shelter and housing stock, including evacuation centres, takes into account the needs of women and children, especially in relation to safety and dignity.

7

Ensure that all people affected by climate displacement have equal access to health and medical care, nutrition advice and, where possible, psycho-social or spiritual assistance, including by

- Providing awareness of and access to basic health and medical services for all people affected by climate displacement, including displaced people, people at-risk of displacement, internal migrants, people living in informal settlements, communities relocating to new locations and host communities, have continuity of access to basic health and medical services, including post-sexual assault treatment and care relating to sexual and reproductive health and chronic illness, as well as nutrition advice and information, as well as medical facilities and stocks

8

Ensure access to education for all people affected by climate displacement, including climate migrants and host communities, including by

- Minimising disruption to education during disasters, and avoiding the use of schools as evacuation centres for extended periods of time.
- Ensuring continuity of access to education for children affected by displacement, and that relocation should not begin before access to education in new locations has been established in accordance with climate standards and building codes.
- Developing secondary and tertiary education courses on climate displacement to promote country-wide understandings of climate displacement and safe, well-managed migration

9

Ensure that all people affected by climate displacement are included in infrastructure planning and have equal access to WASH services, energy supplies, transportation, telecommunications and ICT, including by

- Integrating climate displacement and internal migration considerations into existing national infrastructure planning to meet the needs of people affected by displacement in a range of scenarios
- Improving the climate and disaster-resilience of existing infrastructure in vulnerable communities as a displacement-prevention measure, focused on WASH, affordable and renewable energy, adherence to disaster-resilient building codes, roads, drainage, telecommunications, ICT.
- Providing assistance to communities returning to places of origin to restore basic infrastructure with a priority on immediate restoration of WASH, affordable and renewable energy, roads, drainage, adherence to climate and disaster resilient building codes, telecommunications, and ICT
- Ensuring transportation considerations are built into relocation plans, including free or subsidised bus or boat transport to take displaced people to hospitals, nearest markets/urban centres, during the initial periods (1-2 years) after displacement
- Investing in affordable transportation options for inter-island and intra-island travel, focusing on improving a range of transportation modes, including air, maritime and road transport with Specific consideration to affordable and accessible options for climate migrants in a range of scenarios,
- Exploring partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organisations to improve access to quality infrastructure for communities affected by climate displacement

Mainstream climate displacement and migration considerations into national agricultural, fisheries, livestock and employment policies and TVET initiatives, including by

- Providing timely and appropriate support to livelihoods, agricultural, fisheries and livestock activities during all stages of climate displacement
- Providing small-grant and soft loan options for people affected by climate displacement to maintain and restore livelihood activities.
- Providing access to affordable micro-insurance and “climate insurance” products that serve as additional safety nets to remedy loss of income, damage to housing, infrastructure, crops and other assets from climate impacts
- Connecting people affected by climate displacement to employment services support where available and appropriate
- Connecting people affected by climate displacement to technical and vocational education centres, where available and appropriate.

Protect the cultural identity and spiritual resources of climate displaced individuals and communities, including by

- Supporting the mapping of traditional knowledge, family histories, birth records, connections to land, and property and assets ownership for those affected by climate displacement.
- Facilitating community-led plans to ensure connections to ancestors and relatives buried in original locations are sustained, where this is identified as a priority by affected communities.
- Improving birth registration to ensure personal identification documentation is protected in all stages of climate displacement
- Showcasing stories of climate displacement and migration including case studies of survival, return and relocation are that demonstrate community-level resilience, mobility, problem-solving and innovation in the face of adversity as well as providing places, forums and modalities to share experiences of climate displacement

Strengthen access to justice and public participation mechanisms for people affected by climate displacement, including by

- Establishing complaint mechanisms, which include a right of appeal to a court or independent tribunal, for people affected by climate displacement
- Strengthening accessible and affordable legal support for people to make use of complaint mechanisms and justice systems
- Providing legal assistance or “case management” support for people making insurance claims relating to climate displacement

Uncertainty, Tipping Points, Extreme Future Risks

Much of the established climate science in the IPCC's sixth assessment report provides irrefutable conclusions, for example the determination that it is "unequivocal" that humans have warmed the planet, causing "widespread and rapid" changes to Earth's oceans, ice and land surface. They warn that the present state of many parts of the climate system is "unprecedented over many centuries to many thousands of years", and that many of these changes are "irreversible."

But one of the most challenging aspects of generating and using scientific knowledge, particularly in the context of climate change, is uncertainty, due in part to the physics of climate phenomena that are characterized by a high level of uncertainty, and equally to the combination of uncertainty in climate combined with uncertainties underlying the mechanisms of the interrelated socioeconomic phenomena.

Anticipating loss and damage impacts is one of the most challenging areas of climate science, because projections are based on limited understanding of critical assumptions such as the damage function, lack of precise knowledge of crucial parameters such as climate sensitivity of a certain Vanuatu system or the planetary responses to cumulative emissions of green house gases.

To explain the reality of uncertainty in its findings, each one of the IPCC's results is accompanied with a confidence estimate, which is a quantitative measure of uncertainty, expressed probabilistically", based on "statistical analysis of observations or model results, or both, and expert judgement by the author team or from a formal quantitative survey of expert views, or both."

Essentially, Vanuatu must plan for an uncertain future, where impacts and loss and damage could be much different than they are today.

One of the most dangerous areas of loss and damage planning is that involving tipping points. According to the IPCC, a tipping point is "a critical threshold beyond which a system reorganizes, often abruptly and/or irreversibly." The WGI report identified plausible future scenarios with "abrupt responses and tipping points of the climate system, such as strongly increased Antarctic ice-sheet melt and forest dieback". They also go further to define a social tipping point as the point when "climate impacts push a society towards a state of instability. Those climate impacts are typically aggravated by economic, social and political stressors that reduce adaptive capacity and overwhelm its resilience. Once a social tipping point is reached, a society may experience mutually reinforcing states of economic, social and political instability, leading to cascading disruptions such as livelihood insecurity, migration and displacement, food insecurity, impoverishment, civil and political conflict, and change of political regimes."¹²⁰

A social tipping point is reached when climate impacts push a society towards a state of instability



120 <https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/figures/chapter-8/figure-8-011>

Tipping points are highly non-linear phenomena occurring in complex (and often adaptive) systems, where our knowledge of those systems is imperfect. In mathematical terms, tipping points are well described by dynamical systems theory when the system has two stable states and an external parameter drives an abrupt change of state.

The IPCC is now considering a special report on tipping points towards its 7th assessment report to include potential “rapid climate change” arising from nonlinearity, creating possible “surprises in the climate system”, or “abrupt events.” Examples such as the “possible reduction of upper-level ocean cycling in the Southern Ocean, or a possible but unlikely rapid disintegration of part of the Antarctic ice sheet with dramatic consequences for the global sea level”.

Tipping points have already been particularly pronounced in natural ecosystems, such as warm water corals (changing a system from a coral reef to a algal dominated zone) and forest ecosystems (from rainforest to dryland stands), which can create large-scale disruptions such as on food production, or water resources, with cascading effects on humans and ecosystems. There are complex climate and socio-economic feedback loops operating at various scales and time frames.

Vanuatu’s context makes it particularly susceptible to facing both climate and social tipping points, especially given the increasingly frequent and intense extreme weather events, changing precipitation patterns, and threat from sea-level rise. Due to the small size of our island communities and tight socioeconomic and environmental coupling, Vanuatu’s island societies can quickly reach tipping points, making recovery from climatic shocks prolonged or limited. Even minor natural or anthropogenic events can lead to cascading impacts, causing systems to shift to different operational states characterized by instability and detrimental effects on island residents and ecosystems.

Extreme changes to the climate are also possible given the increasing emissions of green house gases, and the unpredictability of the response of these systems to higher pollutant concentrations. One notable example of such extreme future change involves the rate of sea level rise, which may dramatically increase with more comprehensive consideration of extreme events in simulations. For example, observations show that the overall mass loss from Greenland at present is already higher than projected¹²¹. As of yet, however, it is unclear how such extreme events will affect the overall mass balance and future sea level contribution from the Greenland Ice Sheet. Typically, the future sea level contribution is assessed based on a gradual change in climate conditions using numerical 3D ice sheet models, but variability in ocean-induced and atmosphere-induced melting has been demonstrated to trigger ice thinning, retreat and/or collapse of ice shelves, grounding-line retreat, and ice flow acceleration. The Antarctic Ice Sheet is especially prone to increased melting and ice sheet collapse from warm ocean currents, which could be accentuated with increased climate variability.¹²²

Vanuatu’s Loss & Damage Policy aims to incorporate uncertainty, including the possibility of tipping points and extreme future risks into its planning processes.

121 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41558-020-0893-y>

122 <https://www.nature.com/articles/s43017-023-00509-7>

1

The Government of Vanuatu must plan for climate unpredictability and incorporate strategies to address the inherent uncertainties in climate science and future emissions pathways in its development processes, primarily by

- developing on adaptable and flexible policy frameworks, scenario planning, and prioritizing actions with robust benefits across various potential climate outcomes, even if the exact impacts are unknown
- maximising the use of simulations (or models) to explore potential future scenarios and solution options including the kinds of investments, actions and policies that enable the desired outcome in possible futures states
- where possible use models that analyse robust options across diverse possible future scenarios, including testing hundreds, thousands or even more scenarios that are constructed by identifying material uncertain factors and assigning varied combinations of values to these. The goal is to choose the development pathway that will perform well over many different scenarios (which are uncertain).
- ‘stress-testing’ climate strategies and policy levers against the different future scenarios, including those that are unlikely but feasible (as well as worst case scenarios)
- employing an adaptive approach for flexibility in planning that responds to triggers and can be modified in real time as events unfold. Iterative policy making can be more inclusive and participatory and allow for flexible and reversible decision-making even when risks and thresholds are unclear.
- developing contingency plans and make available contingency resources at all levels, for example the allocation of a larger emergency allowance in the national budget for addressing unknown or unanticipated risks (currently Vanuatu allocated 1.5% of its recurrent budget towards disaster response)¹²³.

2

Build a shared national understanding, through comprehensive consultation and dialogue, of local system functioning and how climate scenarios may give rise to climate loss and damage so that leaders at all levels can develop promising solutions that are flexible and adaptive over time, and that acknowledge that

- the direct effects of climate change are only part of the likely future impacts on the system of interest, with non-climate risks (e.g. value chain disruption, availability of key services, political instability, and more individually or in combination with each other), will have a huge impact on Vanuatu’s development aspirations.
- uncertainty will require a range of solutions that are both incremental (doing more of what we do now) that will most certainly face limits in the future, as well as solutions that are transformational (doing things completely differently) but that come with high social costs.
- uncertainty management depends on enabling conditions, including good governance, participatory and inclusive decision making, diverse livelihood options, coordination across levels of government and society, attention to vulnerable groups in society and building stable consensus which takes time and ongoing attention

123 https://www.dailypost.vu/news/call-to-increase-emergency-budget-from-1-5-to-2-or-3-for-faster-disaster/article_cdc666b7-4a83-5fa7-b869-e08a3c1f682c.html

3

Identify thresholds and tipping points which represent intolerable risk to the social, economic and environmental systems of Vanuatu, and prioritise efforts on averting, minimising and addressing these scenarios

4

Undertake continuous monitoring of impacts and solutions to be able to better anticipate the trajectory of change and the new approaches and tools that may be required for problem analysis and response planning

5

Develop tools and methodologies that help decision makers to act in the presence of uncertainty, for example identifying

-
- low-regret (“limited-” or “no-regret”) strategies
 - options that yield benefits even in absence of climate change and where the costs of the action are relatively low vis-à-vis the benefits of acting.
 - win-win (-win) strategies
 - options that have the desired result in terms of minimising climate risks or exploiting potential opportunities but also have other social, environmental and/or economic benefits.
 - strategies with reversibility, flexibility and safety margins
 - favouring reversible and flexible options enables amendments to be made later;
 - adding proper “safety margins” to new investments ensures that responses are resilient to a range of future climate impacts.
 - employing soft strategies first
 - promoting ‘soft’ strategies (i.e. non-infrastructural options) includes building capacity that ensures an organisation is better able to address a range of climate impacts (e.g. through more effective forward planning, gathering and dissemination of knowledge, reforming institutional frameworks).
 - delay action or decision
 - delaying actions or decisions (not be confused with ‘ignoring the future’) may be appropriate as part of an active long-term strategy where it has been determined that there is no significant benefit in taking a particular action immediately or more information is required to make a decision
 - precautionary strategies
 - taking action that assures safety and prevention when there are threats of serious loss and damage, even in the face of scientific uncertainty

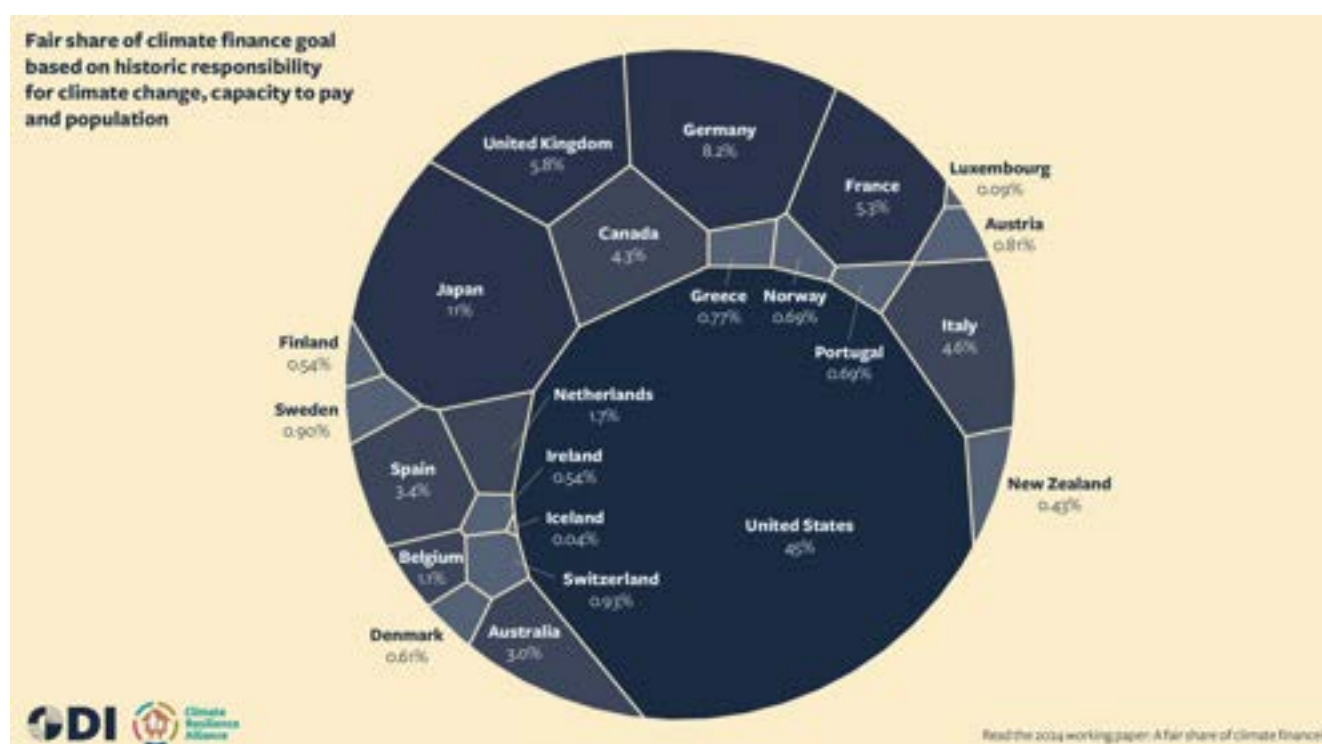
Climate Justice, Protecting Human Rights and Upholding to International Legal Obligations

Climate Injustice

As outlined in the Vanuatu definition of loss and damage, climate impacts unjustly affect Vanuatu and its most vulnerable people, despite the minimal contribution to global greenhouse gas emissions. Vanuatu's 2024 Greenhouse Gas Inventory in the Biennial Transparency Report¹²⁴ found that Vanuatu's total greenhouse gas emissions (excluding removals) was 507.68 Gg CO₂e in 2023, and that emissions peaked in the year 2000 amounting to 663.89 Gg CO₂e, which is the highest level of GHG emissions ever reported in Vanuatu. According to the IEA¹²⁵, global emissions in 2023 reached a new record high of 37.4 billion tonnes (Gt), making Vanuatu responsible for only 0.001% of the total.

Cumulative greenhouse gas emissions, the main cause of human-induced climate change, has a clear origin in historical use of fossil fuels and land by countries. According to the UN Emissions Gap Report, eight major emitters – seven G20 members and international transport – contributed more than 55 per cent of total global GHG emissions in 2020: China, the United States of America, the European Union (27), India, Indonesia, Brazil, the Russian Federation, and international transport (figure 2.2). The G20 as a whole contributed 75 per cent of the total¹²⁶.

In 2024, ODI published a report on the fair share of climate finance owed by rich developed countries given their gross national income (GNI) as a proxy for ability to pay, their cumulative territorial carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions between 1990 and 2022 as a proxy for historical responsibility for climate change, and population as of 2022¹²⁷.



124 <https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Vanuatu-%20BTR1.pdf>

125 <https://www.iea.org/reports/co2-emissions-in-2023/executive-summary>

126 <https://www.unep.org/resources/emissions-gap-report-2022>

127 <https://odi.org/en/publications/a-fair-share-of-climate-finance-the-collective-aspects-of-the-ncqg/>

In its Sixth Assessment Report, the IPCC emphasised the massive inequality in terms of emissions from different countries and country groupings. In the Summary for Policymakers of volume 3 of its Sixth Assessment Report, the IPCC concluded that:

“GHG emissions trends over 1990–2019 vary widely across regions and over time, and across different stages of development [...] Least developed countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have much lower per capita emissions (1.7 tCO₂-eq and 4.6 tCO₂-eq, respectively) than the global average (6.9 tCO₂-eq) [...] Historical contributions to cumulative net anthropogenic CO₂ emissions between 1850 and 2019 vary substantially across regions in terms of total magnitude [...] LDCs contributed less than 0.4% of historical cumulative CO₂-FFI emissions between 1850 and 2019, while SIDS contributed 0.5%.¹²⁸”

Despite its historically negligible GHG emission, Vanuatu is injured, specially affected and particularly vulnerable to the impact of climate change due to its geographical circumstances and level of development; as are its peoples and individuals from both present and future generations, largely due to the exposure to its consequences.

Climate harm and adverse impacts are unevenly distributed with the most vulnerable suffering the worst impacts. A fundamental inequity at the heart of the existential climate crisis facing the planet today is that those who have contributed the least to climate change are also the most affected, as the scientific consensus amply demonstrates. The Summary for Policymakers of IPCC’s 2023 Synthesis Report and the 2022 Report find that:

“Vulnerable communities who have historically contributed the least to current climate change are disproportionately affected (high confidence)¹²⁹”

“Across sectors and regions the most vulnerable people and systems are observed to be disproportionately affected.¹³⁰”

“Increasing weather and climate extreme events have exposed millions of people to acute food insecurity and reduced water security, with the largest impacts observed in many locations and/or communities in Africa, Asia, Central and South America, Small Islands and the Arctic.”

“Climate and weather extremes are increasingly driving displacement in all regions...with Small Island States disproportionately affected.”

The scientific consensus also tells us exactly what needs to be done, by whom and by when. The IPCC concluded in its Special Report 2018 that to be on a pathway “with no or limited overshoot of 1.5°C” global net anthropogenic CO₂ emissions would need to decline by about 45% from 2010 levels by 2030 and reach net zero around 2050¹³¹. The IPCC’s Summary for Policymakers of its 2022 Working Group 3 Report added that in a no or limited overshoot pathway GHG emissions are reduced by 43 (34–60) per cent by 2030 relative to the 2019 level¹³². Making such deep GHG reductions, the IPCC found in its 2018 Special Report, would require “rapid and far-reaching transitions in energy, land, urban and infrastructure (including transport and buildings), and industrial systems”.

Notwithstanding this overwhelming scientific consensus on the causes, impacts and solutions, as well as clear signposting by the IPCC for States on what needs to be done, how, where and by when, State conduct, reflected in States’ Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) submitted under the Paris Agreement until 2021, and the consequent projected global GHG emissions, make it likely that “global warming will exceed 1.5°C and also make it harder after 2030 to limit warming to below 2°C.¹³³”

128 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf

129 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/syr/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_SYR_SPM.pdf

130 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf

131 https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2022/06/SPM_version_report_LR.pdf

132 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf

133 https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg3/downloads/report/IPCC_AR6_WGIII_SummaryForPolicymakers.pdf

The UNFCCC’s 2022 Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) Synthesis Report found that “the total global GHG emission level in 2030 taking into account implementation of all latest NDCs is estimated to be 10.6 (3.6–17.5) per cent above the 2010 level and 0.3 percent below the 2019 level.”¹⁶¹ Clearly, 0.3% below 2019 levels is far removed from the 45% below 2019 levels that GHG emissions need to be at for a no or limited overshoot pathway to 1.5°C¹³⁴.

Human and Interspecies Rights

Loss and damage from the adverse impacts of climate change impinge on the enjoyment of human rights including with respect to the rights to life, food, health, housing, self-determination, water, sanitation, decent work and a clean, healthy and sustainable environment as has been described in numerous resolutions and reports to the Human Rights Council¹³⁵

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) itself provides climate-relevant human rights obligations of States, guaranteeing several rights impacted by climate change¹³⁶, such as the rights to life, liberty, and security; privacy, home and family life; freedom of movement and residence within the borders of each State; not be arbitrarily deprived of one’s property; a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of oneself and one’s family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social services; and cultural life¹³⁷. Importantly, the UDHR expressly extends these rights to “[a]ll human beings” without imposing any territorial or temporal restriction on States’ obligations to respect, protect and fulfill them.

Vanuatu acknowledges that the rights of certain groups of people are disproportionately and often intersectionally affected, including those of Indigenous Peoples, poor people, migrants, children, women and girls, persons with disabilities, the elderly, LGBTQI+ individuals, people living in small island communities and tribal and traditional groups. Climate impacts, like disrupted education, have implications for children’s rights and for intergenerational equity¹³⁸. Loss and damage experienced by persons in vulnerable situations, such as persons with disabilities, is often unaccounted for due to a lack of disaggregated data or unaddressed due to discriminatory laws.

Vanuatu seeks rights and justice approaches that include not only the interests of all humans but of the nonhuman, such as other animals, plants, forests, rivers and ecological systems. Vanuatu asserts that there is a moral and political obligation for the basic institutions of society – including our political and legal systems – to take those interests into account when making decisions. They cannot be dismissed simply because they are inconvenient or costly (for certain humans), and attending to them is not a matter of charity or generosity. Vanuatu supports the UN Resolution¹³⁹ on the right to a clean, healthy and sustainable environment

Overall, Vanuatu holds that human and interspecies rights norms, standards, considerations and obligations should shape and guide all climate action. International rights law applies to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with climate change and its impact on human rights. Vanuatu strongly supports the rights-based approach to climate action which is affirmed in the Paris Agreement, whose preamble includes the provision that Parties should respect, promote and consider their respective obligations on human rights when taking action to address climate change¹⁴⁰.

Upholding International Legal Climate Obligations

Climate obligations for States can found throughout the entire corpus of international law. These obligations are binding on States parties to the relevant treaties. Vanuatu holds that State conduct vis-à-vis climate change carries the legal consequences contemplated in the general international law of State responsibility and in specific rules of treaty and customary international law.

Vanuatu holds that the following obligations arising from general international law specifically govern the acts and omissions of States related to climate change: the duty of due diligence; the obligations arising from the rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; the principle of prevention of significant harm to the environment; the duty to protect and preserve

134 https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/sites/2/2022/06/SPM_version_report_LR.pdf

135 <https://docs.un.org/en/A/HRC/57/30> including 7/23, 10/4, 18/22, 26/27, 29/15, 32/33, 35/20, 38/4, 41/21, 44/7, 47/24, 50/9 and 53/6; and A/HRC/31/52, A/HRC/32/23, A/HRC/35/13, A/HRC/38/21, A/HRC/41/26, A/HRC/44/30, A/HRC/47/46, A/HRC/50/57, A/HRC/53/47 and A/HRC/55/37.

136 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/specialprocedures/sr-climate-change>

137 [https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_217\(III\).pdf](https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_217(III).pdf)

138 <http://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/43/30>

139 <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/3982508?ln=en&v=pdf>

140 https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/english_paris_agreement.pdf

the marine environment; the obligations arising from the right to self-determination; the duty to co-operate and the obligations arising from the principle of good faith. These obligations are binding on all States and the Relevant Conduct is in breach of them. In addition, the following obligations arising from treaties in force also govern the climate-relevant conduct of States which are parties to one or more of them: obligations arising from the Charter of the United Nations and the subsequent interpretive practice under it, including the rights recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the right of peoples to self-determination, the duty to co-operate and the obligations arising from the principle of good faith; obligations arising from the rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights; obligations arising from the right to clean, healthy and sustainable environment as it relates to other rights and existing international law; obligations arising from the UNFCCC and the Paris Agreement; obligations arising from the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea; and obligations arising from the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Each of these obligations are distinct, each governing certain aspects of climate-relevant State conduct, and none of them offers a shield to protect States from meeting their international responsibility if they do not perform all applicable obligations.

Vanuatu holds the legal perspective that there are legal consequences for the conduct of States or groups of States over time in relation to activities that contribute to climate change and its adverse effects, including the cumulative emissions of greenhouse gases of States themselves but also of non-State actors under their jurisdiction, as well as other acts or emissions that have caused significant harm to the climate system and other parts of the environment.

The certain conduct of States has caused both significant harm to the environment, particularly to and through the climate system, and indeed catastrophic harm in the form of climate change and its adverse effects, including a wide range of climate losses and damages.

By pushing for appropriate climate action, recalling and upholding international law, and holding States to account for their conduct, Vanuatu seeks to bolster global and multilateral cooperation and improve State conduct in addressing climate change.

Right to Remedy

The right to an effective remedy is a fundamental principle of international human rights law¹⁴¹, and applies to human rights violations relating to loss and damage from climate change, and calls for reparations to be provided for its violation. For example, the Committee on the Rights of the Child has encouraged States to take note that, from a human rights perspective, loss and damage is closely related to the right to remedy and the principle of reparations, including restitution, compensation and rehabilitation¹⁴².

According to OHCHR, the obligations of States in the context of climate change extend to all rights holders and to harm that occurs both inside and beyond boundaries, to which they should be accountable for their contributions to climate change, including for failure to adequately regulate the emissions of businesses under their jurisdiction¹⁴³.

Remedies for loss and damage could also be informed by other international law principles, including the principles of equity, the polluter pays principle and common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities. Remedies and reparatory justice require a comprehensive and multipronged approach grounded in international human rights law, including, where appropriate, the right to reparations, including restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition¹⁴⁴.

Compensation could be provided for loss and damage to redress harm and the associated violations of human rights. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples contains an elaboration of remedies, including compensation¹⁴⁵. The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Peasants and Other People Working in Rural Areas recognizes the right of people working in rural areas to effective and non-discriminatory access to justice and contains a call for States to provide effective and prompt remedies¹⁴⁶, including the right of appeal, restitution, indemnity, compensation and reparation. In general, Vanuatu views that compensation can be provided for any assessable damage, appropriate and proportional to the gravity and circumstances of the violation.

141 <https://www.ohchr.org/en/instruments-mechanisms/instruments/basic-principles-and-guidelines-right-remedy-and-reparation>

142 <http://undocs.org/en/A/77/226>

143 <http://undocs.org/en/A/HRC/32/23>

144 <http://undocs.org/en/A/78/317>

145 https://www.un.org/development/desa/indigenouspeoples/wp-content/uploads/sites/19/2018/11/UNDRIP_E_web.pdf

146 <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/1650694?ln=en&v=pdf>

Policy Priorities

1

The Government of Vanuatu will respect, protect and fulfill human rights obligations by adopting and enforcing laws and policies to protect people and nature against harm, injury loss and damage from adverse climate impacts

2

Frame loss and damage narratives for advocacy around principles of justice and equity, emphasizing the disproportionate impacts on vulnerable and small island nations, and the moral responsibility of high-emission countries, acknowledging that

- historical and structural factors that have created the climate crisis and determine the extent of the unequal distribution of its effects.
- there are clear links between historic colonialism and unequal climate impacts, operating in the same way that unequal development and global inequality are directly connected to colonialism,
- globalization, unequal exchange, and entrenched forms of dependency perpetuate these inequalities.
- countries in the Global North, primarily responsible for the historic emissions that have created the climate crisis, continue to benefit from this unequal world system and are generally better equipped to deal with the effects of climate change
- Vanuatu and other countries in the Global South, already coping with significant climate adaptation needs, are increasingly facing hard limits to adaptation and are now experiencing economic and noneconomic forms of loss and damage due to climate change
- there is a need for the application of procedural, distributive, compensatory, restitutive, and corrective forms of justice
- there is a need to build compelling, evidence-based cases to garner international support, showcasing real Vanuatu examples of loss and damage
- polluter pays principles have been widely adopted and legitimised

3

Vanuatu will take all available measures to ensure that persons whose human rights have been violated as a result of climate change and have access to an effective remedy, including by seeking redress for loss and damage in formal courts and other jurisdictional justice systems, including on the issue of compensation, including

- Trial tort law against carbon majors
- Humanitarian Law
- UN Law of the Sea
- WTO Rules or other treaties and agreements to which Vanuatu is a party
- UN General Assembly resolutions
- The International Court of Justice
- The International Criminal Court

Vanuatu should engage more heavily in climate attribution science forums, which use robust analytics to quantify how climate change influences the intensity and likelihood of a particular extreme-weather event, including for example the World Weather Attribution scientific partnership¹⁴⁷

Loss & Damage Finance and Means of Implementation

Vanuatu is currently challenged across almost all investment and finance mobilisation dimensions. Debt burdens, a limited ability to mobilise domestic and subnational finance at the required scale, a high dependency on climate-vulnerable sectors like tourism and agriculture, and a strong reliance on overseas development assistance all undermine investment. Concessional finance in the form of grants is particularly important for Vanuatu due to high existing debt burdens and lack of access to other financing sources.

Compounding, cascading and intensifying climate impacts are further constraining investment and development due to negative impacts on GDP and increased reconstruction costs. Vanuatu lacks the institutional and financial resources and infrastructure to effectively address increasing loss and damage while simultaneously pursuing its sustainable development goals.

The failure to mobilise sufficient finance for mitigation and adaptation has led to the current scale of loss and damage in Vanuatu. Mobilising and delivering the right kinds of finance in volumes that match the scale of the loss and damage problem is a significant barrier to action, and more finance is urgently needed, directly accessible to the Government and vulnerable communities.

The complex nature of loss and damage means that no single form of finance is sufficient to address the diverse range of impacts that Vanuatu's communities will experience in the coming years. Tackling this complexity requires the national government and its partners at local, regional and international levels, to use a variety of different financial instruments to address the various impacts and risks that are likely to affect different people in different places over time.

Similarly, the particular nature of loss and damage risks demands that financial instruments used to address them must have different characteristics from those used to support sustainable development, adaptation, mitigation, disaster relief and recovery. While disaster relief and disaster risk finance can help people cope with and recover from climate shocks, they cannot help people deal with the full range and scale of loss and damage that they will face over time.

The Loss & Damage Policy aims to mobilise and provide the financial resources required to implement priority solutions in a way that is

- directly and easily accessible
- new and additional to existing climate finance
- grant based with no obligation to repay
- predictable over timescales of action
- sufficient and adequate to meet the needs of all affected people
- based on the right to remedy for harm suffered

147 www.worldweatherattribution.org

The Government of Vanuatu must allocate increasingly more of its recurrent budget to addressing loss and damage, including by

- doubling the current allocation ceiling of 1.5% of the total amount appropriated by the Parliament for that financial year that the Council of Ministers is authorised to draw down from the Public Fund for the purposes of alleviating a declared state of emergency under section 34C of the Public Finance and Economic Management Act of 2019¹⁴⁸
- preparing climate-responsive national budgets, which actively incorporate climate change considerations, including loss and damage, into spending decisions, allocating funds specifically to address climate loss and damage initiatives, and aligning national financial planning with climate goals and addressing impacts across different sectors of the economy.
- instituting a comprehensive Climate Budget Tagging (CBT) system to fully mainstream climate change into the public financial management monitoring and oversight systems in order to monitor and track climate loss and damage-related expenditures in the national budget system, including by providing comprehensive data on climate-relevant spending that enables government to make informed decisions and prioritize climate investments, and enables transparency, accountability and maximum public scrutiny on government and donors' spending on addressing loss and damage
- include loss and damage finance as a budget policy priority in each of the upcoming annual fiscal policy guidelines and Budget Policy Statements¹⁴⁹
- including robust climate investment mandates and criteria in the Ministerial Budget Committee and Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) screening process, under the oversight of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM), to ensure that all sectors are proactively budgeting for actions to address loss and damage

¹⁴⁸ https://doft.gov.vu/images/2021/Acts/244_Public_Finance__Economic_Management.pdf

¹⁴⁹ https://doft.gov.vu/images/2024/Budget/Budget%20Policy%20Statement%202025_English.pdf

Establish a dedicated Loss and Damage Fund at the national level, potentially as a financing window of a larger Climate Fund) in order to attract and manage loss and damage finance and disperse it to those most in need, which will also

- play a critical role in facilitating practical projects which address loss and damage including those that support responses to non economic loss and damage as well as to slow onset event impacts
- make Vanuatu 'investment ready' to absorb funds from the UN Fund for responding to Loss & Damage (FRLD)
- facilitate capitalisation from a wide range of potential sources including global and regional funding arrangements for loss and damage
- provide a wide variety of locally appropriate disbursement modalities to ensure the fund is accessible and relevant to a wide variety of communities and organisations that are actively seeking to address loss and damage
- be based in sound governance, robust systems of financial management
- be consistent with existing Government of Vanuatu financial processes, and support improved efficiency and resource management across Government agencies and with non government partners
- facilitate effective learning and the rapid scale up of effective approaches through robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) systems



Develop a Vanuatu Country Platform for Climate Action to serve as a mechanism to mobilise finance for the development and implementation of Vanuatu's climate strategies (e.g. the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategies (LT-LEDS) and future National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)) through a country-led coordinated process, including for

- financing the implementation of a long-term country programme for loss and damage which shifts from an individual project approach to a strategic programmatic basis that offers the right type of finance in an appropriate sequence
- mobilising the right finance at the correct scale and pace to support Vanuatu's growing needs and fill critical climate financing, including catalyse both domestic and international financial flows
- investment planning, including the technical sequencing of initiatives over the programme planning period and pipeline development
- financing plans, identifying potential public/private, cross-border/domestic, and market/concessional funding sources and arrangements
- addressing fragmentation and siloed approaches to ensure climate action and finance processes are able to act systemically
- finance mobilization from both private and public sources in a coordinated, structured and innovative manner, including access to new funding arrangements for loss and damage
- recognising that various sources of finance exist that could be used to address loss and damage (or which can be tailored to do so), including
 - debt relief which opens fiscal space for governments to tackle emerging instances of loss and damage,
 - insurance and risk transfer mechanisms, which facilitates risk pooling to share the burden of losses and damages
 - official development assistance (ODA) and bilateral aid
 - philanthropy,
 - national budgets, including both on and off-budget finance
 - individual household savings and assets.
 - risk mitigation instruments,
 - multilateral development concessional finance
 - UN climate funding
 - innovative sources like taxes, levies and carbon market revenue streams
- ensures built-in redundancy, such that if one source of finance is overwhelmed by a shock and can no longer provide enough support to prevent recipients from breaching their coping capacity, there are alternative forms of support available
- donor harmonisation around climate financing opportunities, fostering a wide mobilization of development partners, including by facilitating the implementation of key fiduciary standards
- coordinating different levels and agencies of government, promoting a whole-of-government approach to implementing loss and damage priorities
- facilitating a whole-of-society engagement in a dialogue around the country platform and programmatic approach by engaging government, civil society, the private sector, traditional authorities, faith based organisations, academic stakeholders and development partners
- results and impact monitoring and reporting, evaluation and learning for climate related investments including by sharing information, good practices and lessons learned
- benefiting from the 2024 G20 Task Force for the Global Mobilization against Climate Change (TF-Clima) paper on country investment platforms¹⁵⁰ and the MDB shared commitment to supporting country platforms¹⁵¹
- learning from and incorporating lessons from the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) approach¹⁵² which sees financing agreements between donor and recipient countries to drive the energy transition to lower GHG emissions

¹⁵⁰ <https://climaesociedade.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/G20-support-paper-on-platforms45.pdf>

¹⁵¹ https://www.isdb.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2024-11/Brief%20on%20Country%20Platforms%20for%20Climate%20-%20Action_V12_11112024_FINAL.pdf

¹⁵² <https://www.iisd.org/articles/insight/just-energy-transition-partnerships>

4

Revise and enhance the Disaster Risk Financing Policy 2024-2029 and associated processes to be more directly responsive to climate impacts, including loss and damage, specifically by

- Amending the stated purpose of this DRF Policy to “provide a strategic framework that enhances the country’s financial preparedness for disaster and climate impact response, recovery, and reconstruction, while also integrating proactive measures to minimize disaster impacts and address climate loss and damage”
- Include explicit references to climate loss and damage into the National Public Financial Management Improvement Roadmap 2022 – 2026.
- Ensure reforms of the Public Finance Management system to better mainstream disaster risk and climate impact financing
- Build currently used modalities, including the Catastrophe Deferred Draw-down Option (Cat-DDO) of the World Bank, into the joint disaster and climate investment frameworks
- Include climate loss and damage considerations in the Medium-Term Debt Strategy for 2023-2026, annual budget documentation, and complementary development partner-supported assessments (e.g., International Monetary Fund debt sustainability analysis).
- Mainstream climate loss and damage into the Adaptive Social Protection Policy and the Anticipatory Action Financing Policy
- Include climate loss and damage in government-wide risk management policy, internal audit and external audit methodologies
- Review financial regulations and related instructions related to emergency management and identify of necessary adjustments to clarify procedures and responsibilities relevant for climate loss and damage, including non economic impacts from slow onset events

5

Proactively explore the creation of a sovereign wealth fund, to benefit from the large foreign currency reserves held in Vanuatu, with interest used to support actions to address loss and damage

6

Prioritise new and additional sources of highly concessional finance in the form of grants and other “risk-tolerant” finance that allows for innovation and the incubation of new responses to address loss and damage to minimise Vanuatu’s high debt burden

7

Expand the use and disbursement of Ex-ante contingency funds, triggered by early warning systems, that can deliver financial support to a wider pool of vulnerable households, helping them to prepare for and address loss and damage

8

Expand work towards climate compensation and liability payments as determined by courts of law at all levels as a novel source of loss and damage finance which is based in climate justice principles

9

Explore new and innovative delivery mechanisms to ensure financial flows are directly accessible to vulnerable people, including small grants programmes, cash transfer and vouchers, payment for risk transfer premiums, investment in adaptive social protection services

10

Utilise a an assessment of “fair share” criteria¹⁵³ in negotiations with each UNFCCC Annex II developed country Party against the their current climate finance contributions and based on (GNI) as a proxy for ability to pay; cumulative territorial carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions since 1990 as a proxy for historical responsibility for climate change; and population, to allocate equal responsibility for climate finance provision to persons living in each of these developed countries

11

Implement in-kind financial investment to address loss and damage, including training, capacity building, and alternative livelihood investment

12

Adopt national principles for climate-just financing, including that

- Climate justice sits at the heart of loss and damage finance, such that decision-makers must pay attention to how climate change impacts people differently, unevenly, and disproportionately, as well as redressing the resultant injustices in fair and equitable ways
- no affected individual should be responsible for utilising their own assets to address loss and damage, and therefore suffer further economic disadvantage
- loss and Damage finance should be direct access, new and additional, grant based, predictable and sufficient
- governments must enable a wide suite of ‘layered’ financial instruments to tackle the complexity of loss and damage risks at national and local levels, particularly ensure that the right type of finance can be delivered to the right interventions, in the right place and at the right time, in ways that are locally accessible, flexible and appropriately targeted.
- finance is delivered on the basis of solidarity, equity and justice, not as charity or relief
- funding adheres to principles of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) of Parties to the UNFCCC
- providers accept historical responsibility, capacity to pay, and polluter pays practices
- disbursements focus on addressing the vulnerabilities of the people who are most at risk, especially in remote, rural and under-served communities
- no strings finance that does not increase the debt burden of recipients (provided as grants not loans)
- finance should be delivered through strategic holistic long-term programmes (not projects)
- investments deliver sustainable long-term support, addressing extreme events and slow-onset processes
- finance is fair, feasible, predictable, adequate and transparent
- funds are additional to other forms of finance (such as development, adaptation, mitigation, disaster risk reduction), and must be traceable and distinguishable
- flows benefit from national ownership in decision-making and implementation
- funds are delivered in a timely manner, appropriate to climate impact response need
- approvals and disbursements are not conditional, requiring burdensome “accreditation” processes, but rather acknowledge the functional equivalency of existing systems, standards and safeguards

¹⁵³ <https://odi.org/en/publications/a-fair-share-of-climate-finance-the-collective-aspects-of-the-ncqg/>

International Engagement and Advocacy

Vanuatu has been at the forefront of international negotiations on Loss and Damage, where its proactivity and leadership role has brought new resources and attention to Vanuatu's needs and global action to support particularly vulnerable developing countries.

The Loss & Damage Policy aims to maintain and grow Vanuatu's international loss and damage leadership in being the voice for the climate vulnerable in, inter alia,

- UNFCCC, UNCBD, UNCCD, UNGA, Sendai Framework and others
- International courts and tribunals i.e. ICJ, ICC, ITLOS
- Regional groupings including AOSIS, PSIDS, PIF, OACPS



Vanuatu should Nominate a High-Level team to champion Vanuatu's loss and damage messages to the world, balancing science-based positions with diplomatic protocols, including by

- Seek endorsement from the Prime Minister to establish a focal point at the ministerial level to spearhead Vanuatu's international climate diplomacy initiatives, and appoint a high-level team of Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Special Envoys, Consuls and Ambassadors who will take these issues forward, and act as 'Climate Champions' on critical priorities.
- reform the ineffective ICJ committee to become more inclusive, with wider membership, and to serve as a climate diplomacy taskforce
- clarify the various roles and responsibilities for climate diplomacy among existing institutions, primarily the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Climate Change
- strategically position Vanuatu's presence at the United Nations in New York and Geneva to prioritise climate loss and damage issues
- invest in a new generation of "climate diplomats" by building their technical expertise and advocacy skills and equipping them to be strong, informed voices in complex climate negotiations and leadership roles
- Vanuatu should include loss and damage in all of its major international climate and development submissions and obligatory documents, including
- Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement
- Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs)
- National Communications
- National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)
- Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategies LT LEDS
- Universal Period Reviews
- Statements to the UN General Assembly
- Vanuatu should engage more fully in UNFCCC Negotiating block positioning moving towards the COP31 "Pacific COP" to focus on core loss and damage priorities, including by fostering alliances with other developing and small island states, promoting shared strategies, knowledge exchange, and solidarity in advocating for loss and damage on the global stage with
- the Alliance of Small Island States AOSIS (considering Vanuatu is a founding member)
- the Least Developed Countries LDC
- the Group of Seventy Seven G77 + China developing countries
- Climate Vulnerable Forum/ V20
- The High Ambition Coalition
- The Cartagena Dialogue
- the Climate Club
- the Club of Rome
- the Loss & Damage Collaboration
- PSIDS
- Vanuatu should prepare well in advance and consistently send strong negotiating teams to UNFCCC events, including
- June Intersessional meetings in Bonn
- Seek seats on Working Groups/Committees (adaptation committee, WIM exec committee etc.)
- Pre-COPs
- COPs , including preparation of high impact side events
- ensuring that the voices of Vanuatu's indigenous communities, women, youth, and people with disabilities are represented in international forums to underscore the multifaceted nature of climate impacts.
- proactively making formal submissions in response to open calls relevant to loss and damage
- maintaining a representative group of national Loss & Damage Contact Points
- Vanuatu should prepare for its assumption to the Board of the Fund for responding to Loss & Damage (FRLD) in the current rotation as agreed within AOSIS that the seat will be held by Fiji in 2024, Cook Islands in 2025 and Vanuatu in 2026, including by
- Attending all FRDL Board meetings
- Proactively making submissions and forwarding operational proposals
- Supporting the preparation of funding requests for Vanuatu from the FRLD
- Vanuatu should continuously engage with the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage to seek technical assistance, including by
- Maintaining a representative group of National SNLD Liaison Officers
- Submitting annual requests
- Attending Advisory Board meetings and other events
- Vanuatu should take the lead in regional climate change actions/dialogues/events, and engage fully in regional climate change programmes, taking full advantage of expertise within the Pacific's CROP+ grouping



05

PROJECTS AND PROGRAMMES UNDERWAY



Projects and Programmes Underway

Given Vanuatu's leadership on the issue of Loss & Damage, a range of regional and bilateral partners have commenced support to Vanuatu on its loss and damage action ambition and aspirations.

The table below highlights the initial pipeline projects (currently underway and planned) that are focused primarily on loss and damage issues.

Project Title	Strengthening loss and damage response capacity in the Global South (STRENGTH) ¹⁵⁴	Pacific Island Countries access to and absorption of Climate Finance ¹⁵⁵
Project Duration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the development of country-level loss and damage policy and implementation mechanisms, founded on collaborative research. critical review of documented knowledge country-level diagnostic studies and pilot actions dialogues and knowledge exchange forums 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A range of support services, including: Development of Loss & Damage Policy and Implementation Plan Long-term technical advisors to strengthen institutional capability to access, absorb and deliver impactful climate finance, Strategic feasibility studies to strengthen climate finance implementation and knowledge sharing
Fiscal Volume	36 months 2023-2025	2023-2025
Implementing Entity	96,000 British Pounds (~14,500,000 VUV)	~US\$ 400,000 In Kind; Technical Assistance ~US\$ 400,000
Donor	Canada International Development Research Centre Vanuatu Department of Climate Change International Centre for Climate Change and Development (ICCCAD) Institute for Study and Development Worldwide (IFSD)	Ministry of Climate Change Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) UK Government
Status	Underway	Underway

¹⁵⁴ <https://idrc-crdr.ca/en/project/strengthening-loss-and-damage-response-capacity-global-south-strength>

¹⁵⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/uk-supports-climate-finance-for-the-pacific>

¹⁵⁶ <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/politics/cop27-climate-change-conference-new-zealand-announces-loss-and-damage-funds-of-20-million/6SJVI5C425G7BDPUMBLILCQMS>

¹⁵⁷ <https://www.international-climate-initiative.com/en/find-funding/thematic-call/thematic-call-2022/>

Addressing Climate Change Loss and Damage in the Pacific ¹⁵⁶	Development of a long-term nationally determined programme to address loss and damage in the Republic of Vanuatu under the Santiago network	Building Our Pacific Loss and Damage Response (BOLD Response) Project ¹⁵⁷
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pacific Island Countries are supported and prepared to address the loss and damage they are experiencing due to climate change. • Assessment of L&D requirements • Establishment of L&D fund/funding window • Development of project pipeline • Capitalisation of fund/funding window 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Capacity and L&D Finance Planning • National loss and damage visioning • Assessment of loss and damage capacity development needs • Approaches and methodologies for knowledge management, capacity building and communication • Request to the Fund for responding to Loss and Damage 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build capacities to address Loss & Damage in the Pacific • Scientific basis for L&D Policies • Measuring non-economic loss and damage • Inclusion of L&D in national and regional Policies • Climate finance for loss and damage
To commence in 2025 two years	To begin Q1 2025	To begin in 2025, 5 years
4 million NZD	US\$ 330,000	19.7 mil € EUR shared among regional work, and in Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
Ministry of Climate Change New Zealand Government	Santiago Network; Pacific Advisory Santo Sunset Environment Network Sustineo IFSD	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Climate Analytics Australia-Pacific Government of Germany (IKI)
Underway	Underway	Planning Stages

Policy Implementation Roadmap

The Implementation Roadmap of the National Loss and Damage Policy Annex provides a structured, action-oriented approach to translating policy priorities into tangible results. Given the urgency of addressing climate-induced loss and damage in Vanuatu, the policy prioritizes short-term implementation actions to ensure that the most critical steps are identified, resourced, and executed without delay. These priority actions are realistic, pragmatic, and costed, ensuring feasibility while laying the groundwork for longer-term interventions. The policy is designed with clear milestones and deliverables, supported by a detailed timeline that differentiates between immediate, medium-term, and long-term actions to maximize impact and efficiency.

The implementation process will depend on the commitment of the stakeholders identified in this roadmap to fulfil their clearly defined roles and responsibilities. Monitoring the achievement of the milestones in the roadmap will require the development of new and transparent monitoring reporting and tracking mechanism.

To sustain implementation, the policy includes estimated resource requirements, which should be met through a mix of domestic funding, international climate finance, and strategic donor coordination. To successfully implement the roadmap, donors must commit to resourcing these most pressing and high-impact interventions. This phased pragmatic approach ensures that initial investments are directed toward priority actions that deliver immediate benefits while building the foundation for long-term resilience.



Governance of Loss & Damage

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| (M) | 1.1 | Loss and Damage, including actions to avert, minimise and address it, must be acknowledged and mainstreamed in all climate-relevant laws, policies, plans and strategies developed by all sectors and at all levels, for example in the revised National Sustainable Development Plan, Provincial Development Plans, Area Council Development Plans, Ministry Corporate Plans, Department Business Plans, New Project Proposals, Sector Strategies, Project Implementation Plans etc |
| (S) | 1.2 | Vanuatu's Loss and Damage priorities and initiatives and programmes should be based on broad stakeholder consultation, including with government officials at all levels, civil society, the private sector, development partners, regional technical experts, scientists, academic and humanitarian practitioners, chiefs and traditional authorities and faith leaders. |
| (L) | 1.3 | The Parliament, Malvatumauri Council of Chiefs and the Council of Ministers should utilise screening criteria to ensure that their legislative initiatives or policy endorsements enable, and do not undermine, efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage |
| (M) | 1.4 | The Department of Strategic Policy, Planning & Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) and the Prime Minister's Office should ensure that all proposed development projects, including new foreign aid support, aligns with and strengthens efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage |
| (S) | 1.5 | The National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction should formalise and resource a Thematic Working Group on Loss and Damage to guide and provide technical inputs into loss and damage initiatives, projects and programmes. The group should be inclusive of experts from within and outside of government, including from civil society, the private sector, development partners, regional technical experts, scientists, academic and humanitarian practitioners |
| (M) | 1.6 | The National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction should ensure that all climate and disaster relevant projects under its oversight align with efforts to avert, minimise and address loss and damage |
| (S) | 1.7 | Within the Ministry of Climate Change, the Department of Climate Change, the National Disaster Management Office, the Vanuatu Meteorology & Geohazards Department and the Secretariat of the NAB should review their respective mandates to ensure there are clear lines of responsibility vis-à-vis efforts to govern actions to avert, minimise and address loss and damage, including for example, determining an institutional lead for loss and damage coordination |
| (L) | 1.8 | To further implementation of the Decentralisation Act 2013 (CAP 230), the 6 Provincial Government Councils (Torba, Sanma, Penama, Malampa, Shefa, Tafea) and the three Municipal Councils (Port Vila City Council (PVCC), Lenakel Town Municipal Council (LTMC) and Luganville Municipal Council (LMC)) should integrate climate loss and damage into existing planning processes, including by including loss and damage human resource capacity in future staffing structures and by requesting short-term TA support |
| (M) | 1.9 | Area Councils, Village Councils and Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) should be provided with practical guidance materials on how to plan, implement, report on actions to avert, minimise and address loss and damage within their jurisdictions, as well as advocate for national policy and resource allocation reforms. |
| (L) | 1.10 | All governance systems should strive to further empower locally-led mechanisms to avert, minimise and address loss and damage, especially in ways that elevate the use of traditional knowledge and cultural systems, ensures participatory action, values innovation and operationalises the principle of subsidiarity which holds that loss and damage decision-making authority should be placed where climate impacts and responsibility for outcomes will occur. |
| (M) | 1.11 | Vanuatu should meet all of its obligations related to the UNFCCC, the Paris Agreement and other laws and conventions, including by including and reporting on loss and damage in all subsequent Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs) |

Priority: (S) Short Term (M) Medium term (L) Long Term

Assessment of Loss & Damage

- ① 2.1 Develop and implement a comprehensive and centralised National hazardous event, disaster and climate loss and damage monitoring and reporting system that:
- operationalises the National Vulnerability Assessment Framework,
 - is, to the maximum extent possible, free and open accesses for use by all types of stakeholders
 - is able to disaggregate losses and damages at local scales,
 - considers real and potential risks posed by multiple hazards that could occur simultaneously or in sequence, taking into account how these hazards might interact with each other to create a more significant impact (rather than analysing each hazard individually).
 - is able to extend the losses and damages data value chain by linking weather, observations, climate patterns and hazardous events with related impacts/ losses and damages information and their cascading impacts to support improved analytical options, refined impact thresholds and enabled data use
 - captures short, medium and long-term impacts
 - prioritises the inclusion of traditional knowledge as well as intangible and non-economic impacts
 - assesses the impacts from slow onset events, and their interaction with extreme events
 - incorporates and links global open-access risk assessments and remote sensing to local level data databases to local level
 - incorporates citizen science and social media-based or online reporting by CDCCs and other first responders on the ground
 - is linked to multi-hazard early warning systems (MHEWSs)
 - allows for explanatory and contextual notes in narrative form, conveying the impacts and losses experienced beyond just a number
 - recognizes that tracking past losses helps with future decision making
 - ensures full complementarity with, at minimum, the enhanced data systems to be utilised by the National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs), the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department (VMGD) the National Statistics Office (NSOs), and the Department of Local Authorities (DLA)
 - is fully interoperable with international systems such as
 - the new hazardous event and disaster losses and damages tracking system (DTS) being developed with UNDRR¹⁵⁸ that is synergized with the WMO-approved Cataloguing Hazardous Event (CHE) methodology¹⁵⁹
 - the Multidimensional Vulnerability Index¹⁶⁰ being developed by the UN OHRLLS that assesses vulnerability from all three dimensions of sustainable development (economic, environmental, social) to give a more realistic picture of risk,
 - the Post Disaster Needs Assessment approach¹⁶¹,
 - the FAO methodology for damage and loss assessment in agriculture¹⁶² and others.
 - is housed on a secure, cloud-based system that ensures real-time data collection and encrypted storage with regular cybersecurity audits, data backup protocols, and compliance with international data protection standards to safeguard sensitive climate impact information while enabling transparent reporting and evidence-based decision-making

- ⑤ 2.2 Mandate a department or taskforce within the Ministry of Climate Change or the Prime Minister's Office to take the lead on coordinating national loss and damage assessment and reporting systems

Priority: ⑤ Short Term ④ Medium term ① Long Term

158 <https://www.undrr.org/building-risk-knowledge/disaster-losses-and-damages-tracking-system-dldt>

159 https://meetings.wmo.int/EC-76/_layouts/15/WopiFrame.aspx?sourcedoc=%7b40cec1da-2380-4eb7-aa45-08e29c3fe8ea%7d&action=default

160 <https://www.un.org/ohrrls/mvi>

161 https://dspac.gov.vu/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=157&Itemid=573

162 <https://openknowledge.fao.org/items/5bc863c3-618d-48c8-92ce-26842444855f>

Assessment of Loss & Damage

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|------------|--|
| <p>2.3</p> | <p>Design new and enhanced loss and damage assessment approaches and methodologies to address specific use-cases and tangible decision-making needs, including for example, the determination of financial, technical and capacity needs to address loss and damage in a specific geographical area or estimating long-term non-economic impacts and solution options for slow onset impacts</p> |
| <p>2.4</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a range of indicators and metrics that appropriately capture the range of losses and damages suffered by all social, economic and environmental systems in Vanuatu at all levels and can accurately assess and report the impacts of climate change across various sectors, levels and timeframes be based on Vanuatu stakeholder-derived benchmarking of what constitutes acceptable, tolerable, and intolerable risks align with the latest international approaches¹⁶³ • include core indicators as well as customizable indicators for issue specific tracking with various dimensions and alternatives • serve multiple uses, including supporting decision-making for adaptation, disaster risk reduction and sustainable development, for example aligned with the UAE-Belem Work Program on Adaptation Indicators¹⁶⁴ • do not duplicate existing indicators, or result in undue data collection assessment • be comparable (not necessarily identical) such that Vanuatu's indicators can also respect contextual differences |
| <p>2.5</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all climate impact assessments undertaken currently and in the future • prioritise the collection and use of fine resolution data particularly for information at the scale of local communities • include traditional knowledge as well as intangible and non-economic impacts • capture past and present risks alongside projected future climate risks in order to enable beneficiaries to consider a range of risk scenarios • cover an entire risk spectrum across rapid onset extreme weather events and slow onset processes, and the interplay between them, including over medium to long time scales • are multihazard, and able to capture the interplay between climate and non-climate risk, especially losses and damages exacerbated, compounded and intensified by geological events • integrate uncertainty analysis by adopting scenario-based modelling and probabilistic assessments to capture a range of possible climate impacts, ensure flexible policy responses, enable iterative monitoring, and promote adaptive management strategies that account for evolving climate science, data limitations, and the complex nature of slow-onset and extreme events • include both economic and non-economic impacts, and the interplay between them • are participatory, and allow government and non government entities, as well as women and girls, people with disabilities, youth and children, the elderly, members of the LGBTQI+ community and other marginalized groups to input their experiences, perspectives and ambitions |
| <p>2.6</p> | <p>Wherever possible, integrate and mainstream loss and damage assessments into the existing assessment methodologies, nation-wide surveys and the M&E approaches used in climate and development projects and other processes</p> |
| <p>2.7</p> | <p>Based on the assessments undertaken report on the current and projected loss and damage into all key national documents, including, for example, the Annual Development Report, the Biennial Transparency Report to the UNFCCC, the Universal Periodic Review Reports to the UNHRC</p> |

Priority: S Short Term M Medium term L Long Term

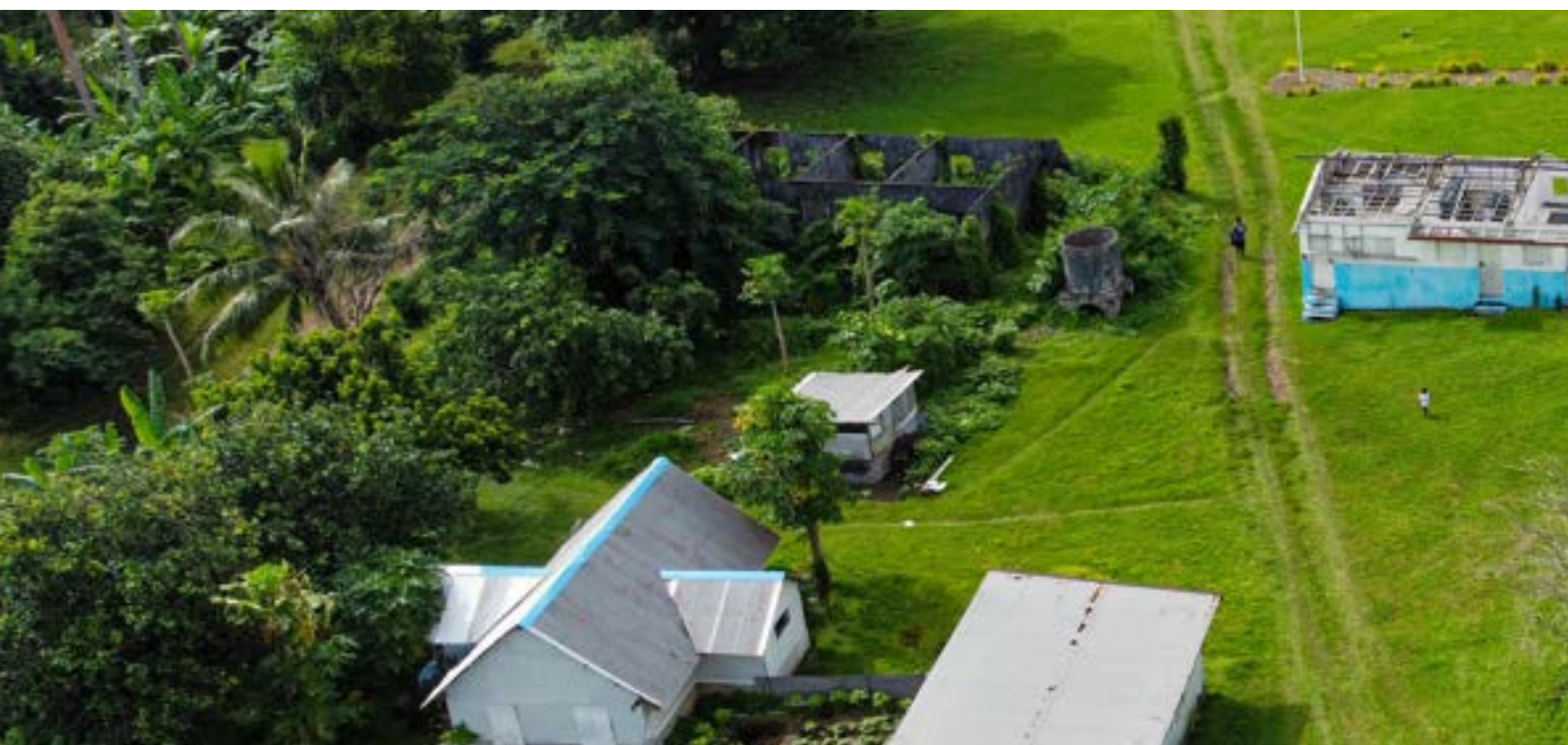
¹⁶³ <https://www.undrr.org/media/101946/download?startDownload=20250209>

¹⁶⁴ <https://unfccc.int/documents/640965>

Assessment of Loss & Damage

- ① 2.8 Prepare and publish an annual Vanuatu Loss and Damage Gap Report on the occurrence, impacts, solutions, finance needed and provided, and policy innovations being used throughout Vanuatu to avert, minimise and address loss and damage and to
- enhance understanding of risk management approaches, strengthen stakeholder dialogue, and enhance action and support by providing concrete data and analysis on loss and damage trends and gaps.
 - serve to make the best available information to programme funding and interventions to avert, minimise and address loss and damage.
 - Provide evidence-based guidance to the Parliament, COM and the NAB on where new and emerging resourcing is required, and on how to programme limited government resources within the wider loss and damage funding arrangements
 - aggregating financial needs for addressing loss and damage L&D, and how these needs continue to evolve over time and with increasing temperature
 - propose options and solutions for closing loss and damage financing gaps, in particular with new and additional sources of finance, and through fit for purpose and innovative disbursement modalities.
 - identifying promising and innovative policy options undertaken to respond to extreme climate events as well as to non-economic and slow onset losses and damages, including links to new national and subnational L&D policies and frameworks
 - update institutional and stakeholder mapping, including local organisations, bodies, networks and experts involved in L&D solutions at different levels and across sectors
 - clarify current understanding on limits to adaptation, and how adaptation actions can also serve to address loss and damage in some instances.
 - summarise research activities and key findings including highlighting research gaps and priorities
 - index data, methodologies and approaches being used by various stakeholders and at different levels to assess, monitor and analyse loss and damage,
 - utilise attribution science to assign responsibility for the losses and damages suffered by Vanuatu
 - include case studies of real impacts, solutions and lessons learned from the actions being employed by Vanuatu stakeholders to address loss and damage
 - refine the Vanuatu loss and damage conceptual framework, definition and typology of actions presented in this Policy

Priority: Ⓢ Short Term Ⓜ Medium term Ⓛ Long Term



Programmatic Approach to Address Loss and Damage

- 3.1 Vanuatu should develop and implement a long-term (at least 15 years) Loss and Damage Programme and Investment Framework Document providing:
- A minimum 15-year timeframe with a phased approach e.g. five-year phases
 - details on the nature and scope of the loss and damage scenario(s) to which a programmatic response is required;
 - the proposed modality, action, policy, or plan(s) for addressing the scenario in question;
 - the scope of the programme and the target results and outcomes it will create;
 - detail on the sustainability and effectiveness of the programme and its associated initiatives;
 - evidence of the readiness to implement the programme and / or details of related projects or technical assistance in place to support implementation
 - a clear articulation of unfolding nature of the risk, uncertainty in how risk and responses will be matched in the future, and the need to take an adaptive programming approach.
 - details on a bottom-up ownership approach i.e. local – provincial – national, such that Government pursues a decentralised approach of identifying L&D actions and subsequent funding mechanisms will be undertaken, in-line with the Government of Vanuatu's decentralisation priorities while emphasising locally led and decentralised approaches
 - incorporation of regional and international experiences and lessons learned
 - guidance on how multi-level actions will be delivered to cover unavoided and unavoidable losses and damages that are beyond the response capacity of the local communities and local governments.
 - be inclusive across all levels (i.e. local, provincial, national) and involve the participation of representatives across all stakeholder groups (i.e. government, private sector, academia, NGOs, CSOs and development partners).
 - provides a comprehensive consideration of the full L&D financing landscape, with a goal to achieve coherence and complementarity among diverse funding arrangements as well as innovative sources of finance
 - ensures the inclusion of traditional knowledge (TK), environmental and social safeguards and a gender, equality, diversity and social inclusion lens.
 - ensures the strong interconnectedness between loss and damage – and adaptation,
 - humanitarian and disaster relief (e.g. preparation, anticipation, response and recovery cycle) -acknowledging that loss and damage can have entry points at each of these stages.

Priority: S Short Term M Medium term L Long Term



Programmatic Approach to Address Loss and Damage

- M** 3.2 The Loss and Damage Programme and Investment Framework should:
- be country-owned and build on national priorities;
 - enable existing national systems to incorporate long term programming for addressing loss and damage into the context of national and regional planning frameworks;
 - be informed by an open, representative and transparent process of multi stakeholder dialogue, ensuring public involvement acknowledging that many different actors, nationally and internationally, share roles and responsibilities for addressing loss and damage that will occur now and in the future;
 - outline realistic programme goals, objectives, and a set of indicative activities that have causal links (through a theory of change) to outcomes that directly address loss and damage experienced in its most direct and localised form;
 - have sufficient detail to ensure there is trust and confidence that on-budget finance will be spent effectively and efficiently, adhering to internationally-recognised standards and safeguards
 - is result oriented, including a justification of robust and functionally equivalent national monitoring and evaluation systems.
 - outline the complementarity of a range of relevant processes and financing sources, including for GHG mitigation, climate change adaptation, disaster risk reduction, humanitarian action, risk transfer processes, and sustainable development initiatives
 - outline the most appropriate new or existing arrangements / national funds / financial management systems available or in development that would be prioritised for receiving flows of loss and damage finance (which may include contributions to existing Trust Funds, regional agencies, civil society, private sector, etc).
 - describe the programme governance mechanism which is tailored to fit the unique circumstances and including a risk management framework to comprehensively demonstrate the functional equivalency of existing or new systems to implement and govern the programme, uphold safeguards, monitor and evaluate progress as well as systems to mitigate potential risks
 - provide a clear articulation of monitoring and reporting processes, such as assurance that programmatic, financial and risk management reports would be completed / updated on a yearly basis by the Government, potentially with technical assistance from international sources (e.g. the Santiago Network, the Pacific Community etc)
 - allow for exceptional circumstances which could trigger more frequent updates within a year (such as changing security risks, exposure to climate and economic shocks or emerging social challenges), with reviews may result in adjustments to the programme as necessary.
 - integrates anticipatory action and uncertainty management, for example by linking programmatic action to early warning systems, climate risk modelling, and proactive financial mechanisms as well as including community-led preparedness, pre-arranged financing (e.g., parametric insurance and contingency funds), and flexible response strategies that account for scientific uncertainty and evolving climate risks
 - promotes co-financing, pooling and streamlining of resources across various funding arrangements to maximise outcomes and overall impact to avert, minimise and address loss and damage
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- S** 3.3 Governance of the Loss & Damage Programme Framework should be stewarded by the National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction, with strong co-ownership by other units within the Ministry of Climate Change, the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management
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- L** 3.4 The Programme should be reviewed and updated annually, or more frequently as evolving contexts require
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Priority: **S** Short Term **M** Medium term **L** Long Term

Economic and Non-Economic Loss and Damage

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| S | 4.1 | <p>Commit to ensuring a balanced and dual-track consideration of economic and non-economic loss and damage impacts in all climate related assessments, programmes, initiatives and funding arrangements, including by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> acknowledging that ‘economic’ L&D can cascade into ‘non-economic’ impacts and vice versa, requiring integrated solutions acknowledging the context-dependant nature of non-economic effects, and the potentially infinite number of ways people can subjectively experience these impacts considering how both economic and non economic effects can lead to other indirect impacts such as psychosocial and mental health issues including anxiety, stress, sadness, insomnia, and depression. considering and developing new methodologies and approaches that assign value to non-economic or intangible losses, for greater visibility and action with stakeholders who primarily utilize monetary estimations in their work (e.g. donors and financial institutions) accepting that valuation of loss and damage is not purely utilitarian, and may be heavily based on existence, cultural identity or spirituality |
| L | 4.2 | <p>Require that relevant instruments and methodologies, for example impact assessments, disaster recovery plans, and adaptation strategies, all explicitly account for non-economic loss and damage</p> |
| M | 4.3 | <p>Design and implement a national climate impact database that systematically collects, verifies, and archives data on both quantifiable economic effects (e.g., GDP impact, asset destruction) and non-economic intangible losses (e.g., psychological trauma, biodiversity decline, loss of traditional knowledge). This database should be</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> cloud-based interoperable across government agencies (building on the databases already existing within the NDMO and VMGD) accessible to researchers and policymakers, ensuring data is standardized, georeferenced updated in real time incorporate community-led reporting mechanisms include traditional knowledge and cultural content support evidence-based decision-making |
| M | 4.4 | <p>Develop a linked databases of how affected communities can and have responded to economic and non-economic loss and damage, and the costs of these actions, in a way that complements estimates of financial, capacity and technology needs. The strategies included in this database should include estimates of time requirements that are aligned to the duration of the impacts (potentially forever with no definitive end point in the case of sea level rise of salinification of ground water).</p> |
| S | 4.5 | <p>Ensure that communities give free, prior and informed consent regarding their provisions of impacts data, and maintain full ownership over the documentation of, and interpretation of, economic and non-economic impacts that affect them and solutions to address them</p> |
| S | 4.6 | <p>Integrate actions to address non-economic loss and damage and fill gaps on intangible impacts into existing strategies to address climate impacts where there are clear opportunities and needs</p> |
| S | 4.7 | <p>ensure dedicated funding streams are available for both economic recovery (e.g., rebuilding infrastructure) and non-economic restoration (e.g., cultural heritage protection, mental health support).</p> |
| S | 4.8 | <p>Integrate non-economic loss and damage concepts are into national education programs, including in the formal and informal sector, and in dedicated training for climate and development decision-makers, community leaders, and policymakers</p> |

Priority: S Short Term M Medium term L Long Term

Extreme, Rapid and Slow-Onset Events

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| Ⓢ | 5.1 | Commit to ensuring a balanced and dual-track consideration of extreme and slow onset events in all climate related assessments, programmes, initiatives and funding arrangements, including by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> balancing resource allocations to address both extreme and slow onset impacts ensuring slow-onset processes, such as sea level rise, are mainstreamed into climate change and disaster risk management plans at all levels ensuring monitoring systems to fill existing gaps in assessing slow-onset hazards are widely used, with actions taken in response considering new triggers for action and support related to climate impacts that occur or manifest slowly requiring that climate and disaster response strategies consider both short-term actions as well as long-term solutions, ensuring that effort and resources are not disproportionately allocated to high-visibility extreme events. |
| Ⓢ | 5.2 | Develop sector and island specific solutions to address slow onset climate hazards, including at different levels of impact |
| Ⓢ | 5.3 | Ensure communities are empowered to develop rights-based loss and damage strategies and plans, which account for addressing both sudden impacts and those that require long-term response |
| Ⓢ | 5.4 | Facilitate experience sharing and lessons learned events, fora and capacity development opportunities to build an understanding of diverse ways to address slow onset impacts |
| Ⓢ | 5.5 | Facilitate the participatory design of solutions that can simultaneously respond to both slow and rapid onset impacts (win win) including by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> enhancing Early Warning and Forecasting Systems , including meteorological monitoring and long-term climate modelling to anticipate both immediate hazards (e.g., storms, droughts) and gradual environmental shifts (e.g., forest degradation, changing rainfall patterns). prioritising Nature-Based Solutions that are able to respond to rapid onset loss and damage as well as long-term environmental degradation, and able to balance the reduction of both immediate and gradual risks. proactively designing new and innovative initiatives that specifically address slow-onset processes identify scenarios where impacts may see tipping points or phase/ regime shifts, requiring new, additional or innovative action |
| Ⓛ | 5.6 | Develop tools and methodologies accessible to members of Parliament, COM, the NAB and public service commission's directors general and directors to ensure that they are undertaking decision making in the face of uncertainty including over the range of projected climatic changes, both related to extreme events and slow onset processes, including taking into consideration the costs, and implications of no action |
| Ⓜ | 5.7 | Develop marketing and promotional strategies to enhance slow onset primacy in the minds of the media, politicians and aid agencies to prevent problem fatigue and the risk of these impacts becoming forgotten disasters |
| Ⓜ | 5.8 | Ensure dedicated funding streams are available for programmatic actions to address both extreme events and slow onset impacts |

Priority: Ⓢ Short Term Ⓜ Medium term Ⓛ Long Term

Locally Led Action to Address Loss & Damage

- 6.1 The Government of Vanuatu will endorse a set of principles to guide the planning, implementation and monitoring of locally led loss and damage action, including by
- Prioritising traditional knowledge and cultural systems
 - Undertaking widespread consultation with those currently addressing loss and damage at the household, village, community, area council, island, and provincial levels and by non government, civil society, traditional, faith-based and other groupings
 - Being guided by the internationally-accepted Principles for Locally Led Adaptation (LLA)¹⁶⁵
 - Undertaking cost-benefit analysis of the efficiency and impact of locally led and traditionally-grounded versus top down and Western-biased action to address loss and damage
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- 6.2 The Government will comment to enabling action to address loss and damage that meets these principles, including by ensuring, at minimum, that national loss and damage decision-making is
- locally determined and driven
 - based on equity and justice
 - grounded in custom and culture
 - acknowledges traditional knowledge
 - builds on existing adaptation, DRR, humanitarian and other national response systems
 - meets obligations related to human rights
 - beneficial (not harmful or averse) to the items, systems and concepts locally determined by Vanuatu's people to hold value
 - contains safeguards and protections for vulnerable groups and those most at-risk
 - enhances complementary, coordination and coherence among governance systems at all levels
 - recognizes that that responses to impacts often depends on local ecosystems and natural resources, which are themselves rapidly degrading due to climate change
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- 6.3 Develop regulations, including redress and compliance mechanisms, to ensure that self-determination and subsidiarity (action and decision-making takes place at the level where impacts are being manifested) are maintained in all loss and damage activities in Vanuatu, especially so that affected individuals and groups (including traditional, customary and tribal groups) autonomously formulate their own responses to losses and damages
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- 6.4 Establish a transparent and inclusive system for making and communicating decisions by higher levels of governance that involve difficult tradeoffs, acknowledging that solutions will often require decisions that do not have net beneficial outcomes as they will necessarily need to incorporate some degree of unavoidable residual loss and damage
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- 6.5 Develop a tracking system for monitoring how locally-led L&D responses and impacts evolve over time to better understand the mechanics of these processes at different levels, and the effectiveness of actions and resource flows
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- 6.6 Promote at all levels, the traditional knowledge and cultural practices used and available to address loss and damage
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Priority: S Short Term M Medium term L Long Term

¹⁶⁵ <https://www.iied.org/introduction-locally-led-adaptation>

Climate Displacement, Relocation and Human Mobility

- 7.1 Strengthen institutional and governance arrangements to address climate-induced displacement, including by
- Identifying a lead Ministry to act as focal point and coordinating entity for all matters relating to climate displacement, internal migration human mobility and relocation
 - Establishing and legislating arrangements for responding to requests from people affected by displacement, including through a coordination approach among other institutions and organisations working on climate displacement issues, in order to support both displaced individuals and host populations
 - Ensuring the participation of and roles for local communities, Chiefs, women's representatives, faith-based groups and vulnerable and minority groups in institutional arrangements and decision making processes.
 - Strengthening Provincial and Area level coordination for implementation, acknowledging that Provincial Disaster and Climate Change Committees (PDCCCs) and Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) should take a lead role in responding to displacement concerns at the local level.
 - Enhancing and expanding the work of the NAB taskforce on climate displacement
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- 7.2 Utilise evidence-based approaches for addressing displacement through multihazards mapping and improved data collection and monitoring, including by
- Ensuring that multi-hazards mapping underpins planning for climate displacement and relocation, and enhancing existing multihazard mapping initiatives with gender-inclusive participatory methodologies and integrating traditional and local knowledge
 - Establishing a climate displacement tracking mechanism to monitor population mobility in all stages of displacement and produce regular summary reports on the status of climate displacement in all provinces and area councils.
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- 7.3 Develop safeguards guidelines and standard operating procedures (SoPs) to ensure common standards for protection of all people affected by climate displacement, including by
- Developing climate displacement and relocation safeguards, guidelines and SoPs that are community-led, participatory and reflect the needs of affected communities
 - Prioritising the safe and timely return and reintegration of displaced individuals to places of origin
 - Supporting local integration for people who have been evacuated and are not able to return home where it has been agreed through a consultative, voluntary and informed process that the community will be displaced for a significant time period or permanently and will need to integrate locally.
 - Ensuring through policy and legislation that displacement and relocation occur only as a last resort, and should be avoided unless all other alternatives have been explored and it is considered absolutely necessary
 - Preparing for a potential future in which there is mass climate displacement from another Pacific island country, or whole islands in Vanuatu and the Government decides to receive and provide support for a mass influx of people.
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- 7.4 Increase capacity-building and training for all stakeholders to promote understanding of and sensitivity to displacement issues, including by
- Developing and running trainings for community, provincial, non-government, and other stakeholders on durable solutions related to climate displacement, return to home lands, local integration when return is not possible, relocation planning process and land law.
 - Compiling useful resources and case studies for chiefs, mediators, women representatives, pastors, and other community members to improve their engagement in displacement and relocation support, while also sharing Vanuatu lessons learned and experiences with other Pacific and global communities facing climate displacement challenges
 - Creating voluntary mentoring arrangements among leaders, displaced peoples, supporting agencies and experts to enhance the flow of knowledge about addressing climate displacement challenges
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Priority:  Short Term  Medium term  Long Term

Climate Displacement, Relocation and Human Mobility

- 7.5 Ensure the safety and security of all people affected by climate displacement, including migrants and host communities, including by
- Ensuring access to critical, essential and emergency services (police, security assistance, justice, without discrimination, gender and protection, physical planning, , disaster preparedness, climate adaptation, emergency relief and social services) including for displaced populations, at-risk populations, populations returning to places of origin, populations that are integrating locally, relocated populations, internal migrants and host communities.
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- 7.6 Incorporate climate displacement and relocation considerations into land management, housing, and environmental planning, including by
- Mapping safe, suitable and available land and housing, in conjunction with multi-hazards national risk maps and broader infrastructure and environmental planning controls, that fully take into account community preferences, proximity to previous locations, customary boundaries, access to natural resources, sources of traditional livelihoods, markets and urban centres, suitability of land for gardening, accessibility of water, electricity, transportation, education and health services, and the protection of environmentally-sensitive land
 - Promoting innovative, community-led processes for negotiating new land arrangements, supported by local government and traditional authorities
 - Exploring and sensitively undertaking peaceful and voluntary land acquisition arrangements for displaced individuals in consultation with custom landholders and traditional authorities
 - Increasing government budget for acquisition of land in the “public interest” to be utilised to address climate displacement
 - Developing affordable, climate/disaster-resilient housing designs (for both temporary and long-term accommodation) that is culturally appropriate and meets the needs of communities involved, private investors and development partners, ensuring that community control over building and design of housing is critical and traditional climate/disaster-resilient architecture should be supported where appropriate, whilst improving the technical aspects of buildings to promote disaster-resilience in both urban centres and in rural contexts.
 - Ensuring that all shelter options are gender responsive, so that all shelter and housing stock, including evacuation centres, takes into account the needs of women and children, especially in relation to safety and dignity.
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- 7.7 Ensure that all people affected by climate displacement have equal access to health and medical care, nutrition advice and, where possible, psycho-social or spiritual assistance, including by
- Providing awareness of and access to basic health and medical services for all people affected by climate displacement, including displaced people, people at-risk of displacement, internal migrants, people living in informal settlements, communities relocating to new locations and host communities, have continuity of access to basic health and medical services, including post-sexual assault treatment and care relating to sexual and reproductive health and chronic illness, as well as nutrition advice and information, as well as medical facilities and stocks
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- 7.8 Ensure access to education for all people affected by climate displacement, including climate migrants and host communities, including by
- Minimising disruption to education during disasters, and avoiding the use of schools as evacuation centres for extended periods of time.
 - Ensuring continuity of access to education for children affected by displacement, and that relocation should not begin before access to education in new locations has been established in accordance with climate standards and building codes.
 - Developing secondary and tertiary education courses on climate displacement to promote country-wide understandings of climate displacement and safe, well-managed migration
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Priority:  Short Term  Medium term  Long Term

Climate Displacement, Relocation and Human Mobility

- 7.9 Ensure that all people affected by climate displacement are included in infrastructure planning and have equal access to WASH services, energy supplies, transportation, telecommunications and ICT, including by
- Integrating climate displacement and internal migration considerations into existing national infrastructure planning to meet the needs of people affected by displacement in a range of scenarios
 - Improving the climate and disaster-resilience of existing infrastructure in vulnerable communities as a displacement-prevention measure, focused on WASH, affordable and renewable energy, adherence to disaster-resilient building codes, roads, drainage, telecommunications, ICT.
 - Providing assistance to communities returning to places of origin to restore basic infrastructure with a priority on immediate restoration of WASH, affordable and renewable energy, roads, drainage, adherence to climate and disaster resilient building codes, telecommunications, and ICT
 - Ensuring transportation considerations are built into relocation plans, including free or subsidised bus or boat transport to take displaced people to hospitals, nearest markets/urban centres, during the initial periods (1-2 years) after displacement
 - Investing in affordable transportation options for inter-island and intra-island travel, focusing on improving a range of transportation modes, including air, maritime and road transport with Specific consideration to affordable and accessible options for climate migrants in a range of scenarios,
 - Exploring partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organisations to improve access to quality infrastructure for communities affected by climate displacement
-
- 7.10 Mainstream climate displacement and migration considerations into national agricultural, fisheries, livestock and employment policies and TVET initiatives, including by
- Providing timely and appropriate support to livelihoods, agricultural, fisheries and livestock activities during all stages of climate displacement
 - Providing small-grant and soft loan options for people affected by climate displacement to maintain and restore livelihood activities.
 - Providing access to affordable micro-insurance and “climate insurance” products that serve as additional safety nets to remedy loss of income, damage to housing, infrastructure, crops and other assets from climate impacts
 - Connecting people affected by climate displacement to employment services support where available and appropriate
 - Connecting people affected by climate displacement to technical and vocational education centres, where available and appropriate.
-
- 7.11 Protect the cultural identity and spiritual resources of climate displaced individuals and communities, including by
- Supporting the mapping of traditional knowledge, family histories, birth records, connections to land, and property and assets ownership for those affected by climate displacement.
 - Facilitating community-led plans to ensure connections to ancestors and relatives buried in original locations are sustained, where this is identified as a priority by affected communities.
 - Improving birth registration to ensure personal identification documentation is protected in all stages of climate displacement
 - Showcasing stories of climate displacement and migration including case studies of survival, return and relocation are that demonstrate community-level resilience, mobility, problem-solving and innovation in the face of adversity as well as providing places, forums and modalities to share experiences of climate displacement
-
- 7.12 Strengthen access to justice and public participation mechanisms for people affected by climate displacement, including by
- Establishing complaint mechanisms, which include a right of appeal to a court or independent tribunal, for people affected by climate displacement
 - Strengthening accessible and affordable legal support for people to make use of complaint mechanisms and justice systems
 - Providing legal assistance or “case management” support for people making insurance claims relating to climate displacement
-

Priority:  Short Term  Medium term  Long Term

Uncertainty, Tipping Points, Extreme Future Risks

- 8.1 The Government of Vanuatu must plan for climate unpredictability and incorporate strategies to address the inherent uncertainties in climate science and future emissions pathways in its development processes, primarily by
- developing on adaptable and flexible policy frameworks, scenario planning, and prioritizing actions with robust benefits across various potential climate outcomes, even if the exact impacts are unknown
 - maximising the use of simulations (or models) to explore potential future scenarios and solution options including the kinds of investments, actions and policies that enable the desired outcome in possible futures states
 - where possible use models that analyse robust options across diverse possible future scenarios, including testing hundreds, thousands or even more scenarios that are constructed by identifying material uncertain factors and assigning varied combinations of values to these. The goal is to choose the development pathway that will perform well over many different scenarios (which are uncertain).
 - ‘stress-testing’ climate strategies and policy levers against the different future scenarios, including those that are unlikely but feasible (as well as worst case scenarios)
 - employing an adaptive approach for flexibility in planning that responds to triggers and can be modified in real time as events unfold. Iterative policy making can be more inclusive and participatory and allow for flexible and reversible decision-making even when risks and thresholds are unclear.
 - developing contingency plans and make available contingency resources at all levels, for example the allocation of a larger emergency allowance in the national budget for addressing unknown or unanticipated risks (currently Vanuatu allocated 1.5% of its recurrent budget towards disaster response)¹⁶⁶.
-
- 8.2 Build a shared national understanding, through comprehensive consultation and dialogue, of local system functioning and how climate scenarios may give rise to climate loss and damage so that leaders at all levels can develop promising solutions that are flexible and adaptive over time, and that acknowledge that
- the direct effects of climate change are only part of the likely future impacts on the system of interest, with non-climate risks (e.g. value chain disruption, availability of key services, political instability, and more individually or in combination with each other), will have a huge impact on Vanuatu’s development aspirations.
 - uncertainty will require a range of solutions that are both incremental (doing more of what we do now) that will most certainly face limits in the future, as well as solutions that are transformational (doing things completely differently) but that come with high social costs.
 - uncertainty management depends on enabling conditions, including good governance, participatory and inclusive decision making, diverse livelihood options, coordination across levels of government and society, attention to vulnerable groups in society and building stable consensus which takes time and ongoing attention
-
- 8.3 Identify thresholds and tipping points which represent intolerable risk to the social, economic and environmental systems of Vanuatu, and prioritise efforts on averting, minimising and addressing these scenarios
-
- 8.4 Undertake continuous monitoring of impacts and solutions to be able to better anticipate the trajectory of change and the new approaches and tools that may be required for problem analysis and response planning
-

Priority:  Short Term  Medium term  Long Term

166 https://www.dailypost.vu/news/call-to-increase-emergency-budget-from-1-5-to-2-or-3-for-faster-disaster/article_cdc666b7-4a83-5fa7-b869-e08a3c1f682c.html

Uncertainty, Tipping Points, Extreme Future Risks

- 8.5 Develop tools and methodologies that help decision makers to act in the presence of uncertainty, for example identifying
- low-regret (“limited-” or “no-regret”) strategies
 - options that yield benefits even in absence of climate change and where the costs of the action are relatively low vis-à-vis the benefits of acting.
 - win-win (-win) strategies
 - options that have the desired result in terms of minimising climate risks or exploiting potential opportunities but also have other social, environmental and/or economic benefits.
 - strategies with reversibility, flexibility and safety margins
 - favouring reversible and flexible options enables amendments to be made later;
 - adding proper “safety margins” to new investments ensures that responses are resilient to a range of future climate impacts.
 - employing soft strategies first
 - promoting ‘soft’ strategies (i.e. non-infrastructure options) includes building capacity that ensures an organisation is better able to address a range of climate impacts (e.g. through more effective forward planning, gathering and dissemination of knowledge, reforming institutional frameworks).
 - delay action or decision
 - delaying actions or decisions (not be confused with ‘ignoring the future’) may be appropriate as part of an active long-term strategy where it has been determined that there is no significant benefit in taking a particular action immediately or more information is required to make a decision
 - precautionary strategies
 - taking action that assures safety and prevention when there are threats of serious loss and damage, even in the face of scientific uncertainty

Priority:  Short Term  Medium term  Long Term



Climate Justice, Protecting Human Rights and Upholding to International Legal Obligations

- 9.1 The Government of Vanuatu will respect, protect and fulfill human rights obligations by adopting and enforcing laws and policies to protect people and nature against harm, injury loss and damage from adverse climate impacts
-
- 9.2 Frame loss and damage narratives for advocacy around principles of justice and equity, emphasizing the disproportionate impacts on vulnerable and small island nations, and the moral responsibility of high-emission countries, acknowledging that
- historical and structural factors that have created the climate crisis and determine the extent of the unequal distribution of its effects.
 - there are clear links between historic colonialism and unequal climate impacts, operating in the same way that unequal development and global inequality are directly connected to colonialism,
 - globalization, unequal exchange, and entrenched forms of dependency perpetuate these inequalities.
 - countries in the Global North, primarily responsible for the historic emissions that have created the climate crisis, continue to benefit from this unequal world system and are generally better equipped to deal with the effects of climate change
 - Vanuatu and other countries in the Global South, already coping with significant climate adaptation needs, are increasingly facing hard limits to adaptation and are now experiencing economic and noneconomic forms of loss and damage due to climate change
 - there is a need for the application of procedural, distributive, compensatory, restitutive, and corrective forms of justice
 - there is a need to build compelling, evidence-based cases to garner international support, showcasing real Vanuatu examples of loss and damage
 - polluter pays principles have been widely adopted and legitimised
-
- 9.3 Vanuatu will take all available measures to ensure that persons whose human rights have been violated as a result of climate change and have access to an effective remedy, including by seeking redress for loss and damage in formal courts and other jurisdictional justice systems, including on the issue of compensation, including
- Trial tort law against carbon majors
 - Humanitarian Law
 - UN Law of the Sea
 - WTO Rules or other treaties and agreements to which Vanuatu is a party
 - UN General Assembly resolutions
 - The International Court of Justice
 - The International Criminal Court
-
- 9.4 Vanuatu should engage more heavily in climate attribution science forums, which use robust analytics to quantify how climate change influences the intensity and likelihood of a particular extreme-weather event, including for example the World Weather Attribution scientific partnership
-

Priority:  Short Term  Medium term  Long Term

Loss & Damage Finance and Means of Implementation

- 10.1 The Government of Vanuatu must allocate increasingly more of its recurrent budget to addressing loss and damage, including by
- doubling the current allocation ceiling of 1.5% of the total amount appropriated by the Parliament for that financial year that the Council of Ministers is authorised to draw down from the Public Fund for the purposes of alleviating a declared state of emergency under section 34C of the Public Finance and Economic Management Act of 2019¹⁶⁷
 - preparing climate-responsive national budgets, which actively incorporate climate change considerations, including loss and damage, into spending decisions, allocating funds specifically to address climate loss and damage initiatives, and aligning national financial planning with climate goals and addressing impacts across different sectors of the economy.
 - instituting a comprehensive Climate Budget Tagging (CBT) system to fully mainstream climate change into the public financial management monitoring and oversight systems in order to monitor and track climate loss and damage-related expenditures in the national budget system, including by providing comprehensive data on climate-relevant spending that enables government to make informed decisions and prioritize climate investments, and enables transparency, accountability and maximum public scrutiny on government and donors' spending on addressing loss and damage
 - include loss and damage finance as a budget policy priority in each of the upcoming annual fiscal policy guidelines and Budget Policy Statements¹⁶⁸
 - including robust climate investment mandates and criteria in the Ministerial Budget Committee and Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) screening process, under the oversight of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM), to ensure that all sectors are proactively budgeting for actions to address loss and damage
-
- 10.2 Establish a dedicated Loss and Damage Fund at the national level, potentially as a financing window of a larger Climate Fund) in order to attract and manage loss and damage finance and disperse it to those most in need, which will also
- play a critical role in facilitating practical projects which address loss and damage including those that support responses to non economic loss and damage as well as to slow onset event impacts
 - make Vanuatu 'investment ready' to absorb funds from the UN Fund for responding to Loss & Damage (FRLD)
 - facilitate capitalisation from a wide range of potential sources including global and regional funding arrangements for loss and damage
 - provide a wide variety of locally appropriate disbursement modalities to ensure the fund is accessible and relevant to a wide variety of communities and organisations that are actively seeking to address loss and damage
 - be based in sound governance, robust systems of financial management
 - be consistent with existing Government of Vanuatu financial processes, and support improved efficiency and resource management across Government agencies and with non government partners
 - facilitate effective learning and the rapid scale up of effective approaches through robust Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting and Learning (MERL) systems
-

Priority:  Short Term  Medium term  Long Term

¹⁶⁷ https://doft.gov.vu/images/2021/Acts/244_Public_Finance__Economic_Management.pdf

¹⁶⁸ https://doft.gov.vu/images/2024/Budget/Budget%20Policy%20Statement%202025_English.pdf

Loss & Damage Finance and Means of Implementation

- M** 10.3 Develop a Vanuatu Country Platform for Climate Action to serve as a mechanism to mobilise finance for the development and implementation of Vanuatu's climate strategies (e.g. the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategies (LT-LEDS) and future National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)) through a country-led coordinated process, including for
- financing the implementation of a long-term country programme for loss and damage which shifts from an individual project approach to a strategic programmatic basis that offers the right type of finance in an appropriate sequence
 - mobilising the right finance at the correct scale and pace to support Vanuatu's growing needs and fill critical climate financing, including catalyse both domestic and international financial flows
 - investment planning, including the technical sequencing of initiatives over the programme planning period and pipeline development
 - financing plans, identifying potential public/private, cross-border/domestic, and market/concessional funding sources and arrangements
 - addressing fragmentation and siloed approaches to ensure climate action and finance processes are able to act systemically
 - finance mobilization from both private and public sources in a coordinated, structured and innovative manner, including access to new funding arrangements for loss and damage
 - recognising that various sources of finance exist that could be used to address loss and damage (or which can be tailored to do so), including
 - debt relief which opens fiscal space for governments to tackle emerging instances of loss and damage,
 - insurance and risk transfer mechanisms, which facilitates risk pooling to share the burden of losses and damages
 - official development assistance (ODA) and bilateral aid
 - philanthropy,
 - national budgets, including both on and off-budget finance
 - individual household savings and assets.
 - risk mitigation instruments,
 - multilateral development concessional finance
 - UN climate funding
 - innovative sources like taxes, levies and carbon market revenue streams
 - ensures built-in redundancy, such that if one source of finance is overwhelmed by a shock and can no longer provide enough support to prevent recipients from breaching their coping capacity, there are alternative forms of support available
 - donor harmonisation around climate financing opportunities, fostering a wide mobilization of development partners, including by facilitating the implementation of key fiduciary standards
 - coordinating different levels and agencies of government, promoting a whole-of-government approach to implementing loss and damage priorities
 - facilitating a whole-of-society engagement in a dialogue around the country platform and programmatic approach by engaging government, civil society, the private sector, traditional authorities, faith based organisations, academic stakeholders and development partners
 - results and impact monitoring and reporting, evaluation and learning for climate related investments including by sharing information, good practices and lessons learned
 - benefiting from the 2024 G20 Task Force for the Global Mobilization against Climate Change (TF-Clima) paper on country investment platforms¹⁶⁹ and the MDB shared commitment to supporting country platforms¹⁷⁰
 - learning from and incorporating lessons from the Just Energy Transition Partnership (JETP) approach¹⁷¹ which sees financing agreements between donor and recipient countries to drive the energy transition to lower GHG emissions

Priority: **S** Short Term **M** Medium term **L** Long Term

¹⁶⁹ <https://climaesociedade.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/G20-support-paper-on-platforms45.pdf>

¹⁷⁰ https://www.isdb.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2024-11/Brief%20on%20Country%20Platforms%20for%20Climate%20-%20Action_V12_11112024_FINAL.pdf

¹⁷¹ <https://www.iisd.org/articles/insight/just-energy-transition-partnerships>

Loss & Damage Finance and Means of Implementation

S	10.4	<p>Revise and enhance the Disaster Risk Financing Policy 2024-2029 and associated processes to be more directly responsive to climate impacts, including loss and damage, specifically by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Amending the stated purpose of this DRF Policy to “provide a strategic framework that enhances the country’s financial preparedness for disaster and climate impact response, recovery, and reconstruction, while also integrating proactive measures to minimize disaster impacts and address climate loss and damage” Include explicit references to climate loss and damage into the National Public Financial Management Improvement Roadmap 2022 – 2026. Ensure reforms of the Public Finance Management system to better mainstream disaster risk and climate impact financing Build currently used modalities, including the Catastrophe Deferred Draw-down Option (Cat-DDO) of the World Bank, into the joint disaster and climate investment frameworks Include climate loss and damage considerations in the Medium-Term Debt Strategy for 2023-2026, annual budget documentation, and complementary development partner-supported assessments (e.g., International Monetary Fund debt sustainability analysis). Mainstream climate loss and damage into the Adaptive Social Protection Policy and the Anticipatory Action Financing Policy Include climate loss and damage in government-wide risk management policy, internal audit and external audit methodologies Review financial regulations and related instructions related to emergency management and identify of necessary adjustments to clarify procedures and responsibilities relevant for climate loss and damage, including non economic impacts from slow onset events
L	10.5	Proactively explore the creation of a sovereign wealth fund, to benefit from the large foreign currency reserves held in Vanuatu, with interest used to support actions to address loss and damage
S	10.6	Prioritise new and additional sources of highly concessional finance in the form of grants and other “risk-tolerant” finance that allows for innovation and the incubation of new responses to address loss and damage to minimise Vanuatu’s high debt burden
M	10.7	Expand the use and disbursement of Ex-ante contingency funds, triggered by early warning systems, that can deliver financial support to a wider pool of vulnerable households, helping them to prepare for and address loss and damage
M	10.8	Expand work towards climate compensation and liability payments as determined by courts of law at all levels as a novel source of loss and damage finance which is based in climate justice principles
S	10.9	Explore new and innovative delivery mechanisms to ensure financial flows are directly accessible to vulnerable people, including small grants programmes, cash transfer and vouchers, payment for risk transfer premiums, investment in adaptive social protection services
L	10.10	Utilise a an assessment of “fair share” criteria[1] in negotiations with each UNFCCC Annex II developed country Party against the their current climate finance contributions and based on (GNI) as a proxy for ability to pay; cumulative territorial carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions since 1990 as a proxy for historical responsibility for climate change; and population, to allocate equal responsibility for climate finance provision to persons living in each of these developed countries
S	10.11	Implement in-kind financial investment to address loss and damage, including training, capacity building, and alternative livelihood investment

Priority: S Short Term M Medium term L Long Term

Loss & Damage Finance and Means of Implementation

- ⑤ 10.12 Adopt national principles for climate-just financing, including that
- Climate justice sits at the heart of loss and damage finance, such that decision-makers must pay attention to how climate change impacts people differently, unevenly, and disproportionately, as well as redressing the resultant injustices in fair and equitable ways
 - no affected individual should be responsible for utilising their own assets to address loss and damage, and therefore suffer further economic disadvantage
 - loss and Damage finance should be direct access, new and additional, grant based, predictable and sufficient
 - governments must enable a wide suite of ‘layered’ financial instruments to tackle the complexity of loss and damage risks at national and local levels, particularly ensure that the right type of finance can be delivered to the right interventions, in the right place and at the right time, in ways that are locally accessible, flexible and appropriately targeted.
 - finance is delivered on the basis of solidarity, equity and justice, not as charity or relief
 - funding adheres to principles of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) of Parties to the UNFCCC
 - providers accept historical responsibility, capacity to pay, and polluter pays practices
 - disbursements focus on addressing the vulnerabilities of the people who are most at risk, especially in remote, rural and under-served communities
 - no strings finance that does not increase the debt burden of recipients (provided as grants not loans)
 - finance should be delivered through strategic holistic long-term programmes (not projects)
 - investments deliver sustainable long-term support, addressing extreme events and slow-onset processes
 - finance is fair, feasible, predictable, adequate and transparent
 - funds are additional to other forms of finance (such as development, adaptation, mitigation, disaster risk reduction), and must be traceable and distinguishable
 - flows benefit from national ownership in decision-making and implementation
 - funds are delivered in a timely manner, appropriate to climate impact response need
 - approvals and disbursements are not conditional, requiring burdensome “accreditation” processes, but rather acknowledge the functional equivalency of existing systems, standards and safeguards

Priority: ⑤ Short Term ④ Medium term ③ Long Term

International Engagement and Advocacy

- 11.1 Vanuatu should Nominate a High-Level team to champion Vanuatu's loss and damage messages to the world, balancing science-based positions with diplomatic protocols, including by
- Seek endorsement from the Prime Minister to establish a focal point at the ministerial level to spearhead Vanuatu's international climate diplomacy initiatives, and appoint a high-level team of Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Special Envoys, Consuls and Ambassadors who will take these issues forward, and act as 'Climate Champions' on critical priorities.
 - reform the ineffective ICJ committee to become more inclusive, with wider membership, and to serve as a climate diplomacy taskforce
 - clarify the various roles and responsibilities for climate diplomacy among existing institutions, primarily the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Climate Change
 - strategically position Vanuatu's presence at the United Nations in New York and Geneva to prioritise climate loss and damage issues
 - invest in a new generation of "climate diplomats" by building their technical expertise and advocacy skills and equipping them to be strong, informed voices in complex climate negotiations and leadership roles
-
- 11.2 Vanuatu should include loss and damage in all of its major international climate and development submissions and obligatory documents, including
- Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to the Paris Agreement
 - Biennial Transparency Reports (BTRs)
 - National Communications
 - National Adaptation Plans (NAPs)
 - Long-Term Low Emissions Development Strategies LT LEDS
 - Universal Period Reviews
 - Statements to the UN General Assembly
-
- 11.3 Vanuatu should engage more fully in UNFCCC Negotiating block positioning moving towards the COP31 "Pacific COP" to focus on core loss and damage priorities, including by fostering alliances with other developing and small island states, promoting shared strategies, knowledge exchange, and solidarity in advocating for loss and damage on the global stage with
- the Alliance of Small Island States AOSIS (considering Vanuatu is a founding member)
 - the Least Developed Countries LDC
 - the Group of Seventy Seven G77 + China developing countries
 - Climate Vulnerable Forum/ V20
 - High Ambition Coalition
 - Cartagena Dialogue
 - the Climate Club
 - the Club of Rome
 - the Loss & Damage Collaboration
 - PSIDS
-
- 11.4 Vanuatu should prepare well in advance and consistently send strong negotiating teams to UNFCCC events, including
- June Intersessional meetings in Bonn
 - Seek seats on Working Groups/Committees (adaptation committee, WIM exec committee etc.)
 - Pre-COPs
 - COPs , including preparation of high impact side events
 - ensuring that the voices of Vanuatu's indigenous communities, women, youth, and people with disabilities are represented in international forums to underscore the multifaceted nature of climate impacts.
 - proactively making formal submissions in response to open calls relevant to loss and damage
 - maintaining a representative group of national Loss & Damage Contact Points
-

Priority:  Short Term  Medium term  Long Term

International Engagement and Advocacy

- 11.5 Vanuatu should prepare for its assumption to the Board of the Fund for responding to Loss & Damage (FRLD) in the current rotation as agreed within AOSIS that the seat will be held by Fiji in 2024, Cook Islands in 2025 and Vanuatu in 2026, including by
- Attending all FRDL Board meetings
 - Proactively making submissions and forwarding operational proposals
 - Supporting the preparation of funding requests for Vanuatu from the FRLD
-
- 11.6 Vanuatu should continuously engage with the Santiago Network on Loss and Damage to seek technical assistance, including by
- Maintaining a representative group of National SNLD Liaison Officers
 - Submitting annual requests
 - Attending Advisory Board meetings and other events
-
- 11.7 Vanuatu should take the lead in regional climate change actions/dialogues/events, and engage fully in regional climate change programmes, taking full advantage of expertise within the Pacific's CROP+ grouping
-

Priority: Ⓢ Short Term Ⓜ Medium term Ⓛ Long Term



06

IMPLEMENTATION ROADMAP 2025-2030





The table below presents concrete actions to achieve the priority short-term ambitions outlined in the Policy, this Roadmap should be revised annually as goals have been achieved and new priorities emerge

Policy Priority 1.2

Vanuatu's Loss and Damage priorities and initiatives and programmes should be based on broad stakeholder consultation, including with government officials at all levels, civil society, the private sector, development partners, regional technical experts, scientists, academic and humanitarian practitioners, chiefs and traditional authorities and faith leaders.

Action(s):	Completion and Performance Metrics:	Funding:	Lead Agency:
Request assistance from the Santiago Network to commence a national consultation and visioning exercise to collect and consolidate stakeholder views on loss and damage need and potential solutions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Santiago Network recruits OBNE Localized and Vanuatu-specific concept/definition of loss and damage refined , Fit-for-purpose national mechanism to avert, minimise and address loss and damage endorsed by NAB Prioritised list compiled of activities, projects and programmes to address extreme and rapid onset and slow-onset hazards, including associated economic and non-economic losses and damages, with estimated costs. 	40,950,000 VT secured Santiago Network, Strength and GGGI Projects	DoCC with OBNE of SNLD

Policy Priority 1.5

The National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction should formalise and resource a Thematic Working Group on Loss and Damage to guide and provide technical inputs into loss and damage initiatives, projects and programmes. The group should be inclusive of experts from within and outside of government, including from civil society, the private sector, development partners, regional technical experts, scientists, academic and humanitarian practitioners.

Action(s):	Completion and Performance Metrics:	Funding:	Lead Agency:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop an WG TOR Reconfirm and approve members from Government, Non Government, Subnational and International organisations Establish information sharing and communication modalities Ensure regular meetings (at least monthly) Recruit a WG Secretariat to support day to day operations 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NAB endorses formalisation of Loss & Damage Working Group WG Secretariat Recruited 	35,100,000 VT partially funded Strength and GGGI Projects	NAB Secretariat

Policy Priority 1.7

Within the Ministry of Climate Change, the Department of Climate Change, the National Disaster Management Office, the Vanuatu Meteorology & Geohazards Department and the Secretariat of the NAB should review their respective mandates to ensure there are clear lines of responsibility vis-à-vis efforts to govern actions to avert, minimise and address loss and damage, including for example, determining an institutional lead for loss and damage coordination.

Action(s):	Completion and Performance Metrics:	Funding:	Lead Agency:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting among heads of MoCC Departments to present their work on loss and damage based on conceptual framework, definition and typology of actions DG of MoCC to consider new mandates, roles and responsibilities in respect to loss and damage, and appoint a "lead" agency for coordination purposes Hold regular meetings among MoCC Departments (at least bi monthly) to share progress and update on working arrangements for loss and damage coordination and action 	Lead agency in MoCC for coordinating Loss & Damage is appointed	5,000,000 VT no funding	DG MoCC

Policy Priority 2.2

Mandate a department or taskforce within the Ministry of Climate Change or the Prime Minister's Office to take the lead on coordinating national loss and damage assessment and reporting systems.

Action(s):

- Meeting between DGs of MoCC and PMO to present their work on loss and damage based on conceptual framework, definition and typology of actions
- DGs of MoCC and PMO to consider new mandates, roles and responsibilities in respect to loss and damage, and appoint a "lead" national agency for coordination purposes
- Hold regular meetings among MoCC and PMO senior officials (at least bi monthly) to share progress and update on working arrangements for loss and damage coordination and action

Completion and Performance Metrics:

National Lead agency for coordinating Loss & Damage is appointed

Funding:

1,950,000 VT no funding

Lead Agency:

DG MoCC and DG PMO

Policy Priority 2.6

Wherever possible, integrate and mainstream loss and damage assessments into the existing assessment methodologies, nation-wide surveys and the M&E approaches used in climate and development projects and other processes

Action(s):

- Undertake a review of the climate-related assessments being undertaken by NDMO, VMGD, DoCC, DEPC, DLA, NSO, Private Sector, NGOs, Donor Projects and others
- Identify clear entry points for Loss & Damage to be included/mainstreamed
- Hold an assessment forum to agree on changes to assessment regimes for complementary purposes
- Integrate the approaches into the National Vulnerability Assessment Framework

Completion and Performance Metrics:

L&D is integrated into key climate related assessments, including community profiles, site specific vulnerability analyses, and national censuses

Funding:

850,000 VT partial funding | SPC Danish support for L&D, Pacific NDC Hub on NVAF, Climate Projects VCCRP, VCAP II, BOLD

Lead Agency:

DG MoCC and DG PMO

Policy Priority 3.3

Governance of the Loss & Damage Programme Framework should be stewarded by the National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction, with strong co-ownership by other units within the Ministry of Climate Change, the Prime Minister's Office and the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management

Action(s):

- Seek support from the Santiago Network to develop a Loss & Damage Country Programme and Investment Framework
- Hold a high-level meeting among DGs of MoCC, PMO and MFEM to confirm Vanuatu's willingness to develop a country platform to consolidate finance for addressing climate impacts
- Convene a donor roundtable to sensitise partners on the programmatic and platform approach, and expectations on sources of finance and modalities for support
- NAB to establish a country programme taskforce, including coordination with the climate finance working group and the loss and damage working group, to develop a costed concept for the Country Programme Framework

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Santiago Network recruits OBNE
- Concept note for Loss and Damage Programme Framework endorsed by NAB

Funding:

20,000,000 VT partial funding | Santiago Network

Lead Agency:

NAB Secretariat

Policy Priority 4.1

Commit to ensuring a balanced and dual-track consideration of economic and non-economic loss and damage impacts in all climate related assessments, programmes, initiatives and funding arrangements, including by

- acknowledging that ‘economic’ L&D can cascade into ‘non-economic’ impacts and vice versa, requiring integrated solutions
- acknowledging the context-dependant nature of non-economic effects, and the potentially infinite number of ways people can subjectively experience these impacts
- considering how both economic and non economic effects can lead to other indirect impacts such as psychosocial and mental health issues including anxiety, stress, sadness, insomnia, and depression.
- considering and developing new methodologies and approaches that assign value to non-economic or intangible losses, for greater visibility and action with stakeholders who primarily utilize monetary estimations in their work (e.g. donors and financial institutions)
- accepting that valuation of loss and damage is not purely utilitarian, and may be heavily based on existence, cultural identity or spirituality

Action(s):

- Convene a Non Economic Loss and Damage National Forum to identify a range of intangible impacts experienced and projected
- Undertake a valuation analysis to assign economic values, wherever possible, to the intangible impacts
- Present to COM, Parliament, the Ministerial Budget Committee and the NAB on the types and equivalent costs related to non-economic loss and damage
- Develop communications products related to NELD
- Amend key disaster and climate planning processes to formally account for NELD alongside economic effects
- Report on NELD in key national and international documents, including the Annual Development Report, BTR and UPR submissions

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Comprehensive Analysis of NELD types and cost presented to COM, Parliament, MBC and NAB
- NELD communications products disseminated to all 6 provinces
- NELD sections appear in ADR, NDC, BTR

Funding:

8,000,000 VT no funding

Lead Agency:

DG MoCC

Policy Priority 4.5

Ensure that communities give free, prior and informed consent regarding their provisions of impacts data, and maintain full ownership over the documentation of, and interpretation of, economic and non-economic impacts that affect them and solutions to address them

Action(s):

- Conduct a review of safeguards approaches in climate projects, and identify entry points for strengthening FPIC in regard to sharing climate impacts, loss and damage
- Conduct high-level meetings with the Vanuatu Cultural Center and other cultural experts and identify suitable approaches and protocols that enable the collection, sharing and utilisation of traditional knowledge and experiences of climate impacts, loss and damage in a way that allows constructive cooperation with indigenous populations
- Develop a standard operating procedure for engaging with ni-Vanuatu communities in the context of loss and damage initiatives

Completion and Performance Metrics:

SOP on community engagement for loss and damage endorsed

Funding:

920,000 VT no funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC, MoIA and Vanuatu Cultural Center

Policy Priority 4.6

Integrate actions to address non-economic loss and damage and fill gaps on intangible impacts into existing strategies to address climate impacts where there are clear opportunities and needs

Action(s):

- Convene a Non Economic Loss and Damage National Forum to identify a range of intangible impacts experienced and projected
- Develop diverse locally-led solutions that address each of the identified impacts, and include costing to implement them at various scales (family/household, community, area council, province etc)
- Convene a Loss & Damage Solutions Forum to showcase these actions, and encourage all types of stakeholders to integrate these solutions into their initiatives
- Develop a range of financing proposals to the FRLD and other sources of finance to fund the implementation of these initiatives
- Integrate the identified solutions into the Loss & Damage Country Programme, Country Platforms and Investment Framework

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Locally led Solutions to address loss and damage have been identified and are funded for implementation in all vulnerable communities
- A funding proposal to the FRLD has been submitted and approved

Funding:

8,500,000
VT partial
funding

Lead Agency:

DG MoCC.
MoIA, MFEM

Policy Priority 4.7

Ensure dedicated funding streams are available for both economic recovery (e.g., rebuilding infrastructure) and non-economic restoration (e.g., cultural heritage protection, mental health support)

Action(s):

- Undertake a review of funding streams currently available that are able to directly address non economic loss and damage
- Publish and widely disseminate NELD funding opportunities, especially among vulnerable groups
- Hold a roundtable with donor agencies, and other financial stakeholders (banks, insurance companies etc) to proactively develop new funding streams to address NELD that are locally appropriate and feasible
- Ensure that Vanuatu's new Loss & Damage or Climate Fund has a dedicated window for funding NELD, with minimum expenditure percentages assigned

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Comprehensive list of NELD funding opportunities published
- NELD Funding window available in new national I&d fund

Funding:

2,300,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC, MFEM
and Vanuatu
Cultural
Center

Policy Priority 4.8

Integrate non-economic loss and damage concepts are into national education programs, including in the formal and informal sector, and in dedicated training for climate and development decision-makers, community leaders, and policymakers

Action(s):

- Undertake a review of the national education curriculum K-13 to identify entry points for loss and damage education, and proposed reforms and new initiatives needed
- Undertake a review of the climate courses available at the VIT to identify entry points for loss and damage education, and proposed reforms and new initiatives needed
- Submit a formal request to USP and NUV to include loss and damage topics in the range of climate-relevant courses on offer at tertiary level
- Develop and deliver a Loss & Damage short-course (delivered over 1-5 days) customisable for a diverse target audience including of climate and development decision-makers, community leaders, and policymakers

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Formal and Informal L&D Education Reviews Published
- USP and NUV include L&D in their course offerings
- Short Course on L&D tailored for delivery to at least climate and development decision-makers, community leaders, and policymakers

Funding:

7,000,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoYET with
MoCC

Policy Priority 5.1

Commit to ensuring a balanced and dual-track consideration of extreme and slow onset events in all climate related assessments, programmes, initiatives and funding arrangements, including by:

- balancing resource allocations to address both extreme and slow onset impacts
- ensuring slow-onset processes, such as sea level rise, are mainstreamed into climate change and disaster risk management plans at all levels
- ensuring monitoring systems to fill existing gaps in assessing slow-onset hazards are widely used, with actions taken in response
- considering new triggers for action and support related to climate impacts that occur or manifest slowly
- requiring that climate and disaster response strategies consider both short-term actions as well as long-term solutions, ensuring that effort and resources are not disproportionately allocated to high-visibility extreme events.

Action(s):

- Convene a Slow Onset Events National Forum to identify a range of impacts experienced and projected
- Present to COM, Parliament, the Ministerial Budget Committee and the NAB on the types of Slow Onset Risks and loss and damage impacts projected over time
- Develop communications products related to slow onset impacts
- Amend key disaster and climate planning processes to formally account for slow onset events in addition to extreme events
- develop criteria for the declaration of a state of emergency or other method to acknowledge and financial support a response to slow onset impacts
- Report on slow onset impacts in key national and international documents, including the Annual Development Report, BTR and UPR submissions

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Comprehensive Analysis of Slow Onset Impact types and cost presented to COM, Parliament, MBC and NAB
- Slow Onset communications products disseminated to all 6 provinces
- Slow Onset loss and damage sections appear in ADR, NDC, BTR

Funding:

8,000,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

DG MoCC

Policy Priority 5.2

Develop sector and island specific solutions to address slow onset climate hazards, including at different levels of impact

Action(s):

- Convene sector focus groups and forums to share knowledge, experiences and best practices around addressing slow onset impacts
- Publish a comprehensive list of solutions locally developed, including with guidance notes on implementation and costing
- Publish case studies of how a range of stakeholder types have successfully begun to address slow onset impacts

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Comprehensive solutions for slow-onset impacts published
- At least 5 case studies on addressing slow onset impacts from different sectors and levels published

Funding:

3,500,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC

Policy Priority 5.3

Ensure communities are empowered to develop rights-based loss and damage strategies and plans, which account for addressing both sudden impacts and those that require long-term response

Action(s):

- Undertake a review of how Loss and damage harm from climate impacts can affect the full enjoyment of human rights
- Undertake a review of current community and area council planning processes, including the format of planning documents produced, and identify entry points for rights-based loss and damage action
- Convene a national forum to discuss and propose ways forward to ensure loss and damage action can be undertaken in a way that respects and upholds human rights
- Publish a SOP on the development of community plans and strategies that are rights-based and include loss and damage
- Support communities to develop new, or revise existing plans in a way that respect human rights and effectively incorporate loss and damage

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- SOP on rights-based community loss and damage planning published
- At least 5 communities supported to develop rights-based plans that include loss and damage

Funding:

7,500,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoIA, MoCC

Policy Priority 5.2

Develop sector and island specific solutions to address slow onset climate hazards, including at different levels of impact

Action(s):

- Convene sector focus groups and forums to share knowledge, experiences and best practices around addressing slow onset impacts
- Publish a comprehensive list of solutions locally developed, including with guidance notes on implementation and costing
- Publish case studies of how a range of stakeholder types have successfully begun to address slow onset impacts

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Comprehensive solutions for slow-onset impacts published
- At least 5 case studies on addressing slow onset impacts from different sectors and levels published

Funding:

3,500,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC

Policy Priority 5.4

Facilitate experience sharing and lessons learned events, fora and capacity development opportunities to build an understanding of diverse ways to address slow onset impacts

Action(s):

- Convene a national loss and damage Symposium to share information and build capacities around actions to address loss and damage
- Develop loss and damage communication products and materials
- Create and publish content on social media that simplifies loss and damage concepts and encourages public debate and feedback
- Undertake online and social-media based surveys among specific groups and the general public on their understanding of loss and damage issues, and opportunities for further capacity development

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- L&D Symposium Report
- New L&D IEC products published and disseminated
- A dedicated L&D social media presence
- Analysed survey results indicating L&D capacity gaps and needs

Funding:

5,400,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC

Policy Priority 5.5

Facilitate the participatory design of solutions that can simultaneously respond to both slow and rapid onset impacts (win win) including by:

- enhancing Early Warning and Forecasting Systems , including meteorological monitoring and long-term climate modelling to anticipate both immediate hazards (e.g., storms, droughts) and gradual environmental shifts (e.g., forest degradation, changing rainfall patterns).
- prioritising Nature-Based Solutions that are able to respond to rapid onset loss and damage as well as long-term environmental degradation, and able to balance the reduction of both immediate and gradual risks.
- proactively designing new and innovative initiatives that specifically address slow-onset processes
- identify scenarios where impacts may see tipping points or phase/regime shifts, requiring new, additional or innovative action

Action(s):

- Convene a national loss and damage Symposium to share information and build capacities around actions to address loss and damage
- Hold area council level meetings to identify best practice, locally-developed solutions to address a range of loss and damage risks
- Publish case studies on solutions to address extreme climate change and tipping points, including but not limited to livelihood transformation and relocation
- Publish case studies on a range of ecosystem-based solutions which address loss and damage from extreme and slow onset events

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- L&D Symposium Report
- Comprehensive list of locally-derived L&D solutions published
- Case studies on addressing extreme change/tipping points published
- Case studied on ecosystem-based solutions published

Funding:

10,300,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC, MoIA

Policy Priority 5.3

The Government of Vanuatu will endorse a set of principles to guide the planning, implementation and monitoring of locally led loss and damage action, including by

- Undertaking widespread consultation with those currently addressing loss and damage at the household, village, community, area council, island, and provincial levels and by non government, civil society, traditional, faith-based and other groupings
- Being guided by the internationally-accepted Principles for Locally Led Adaptation (LLA)
- Undertaking cost-benefit analysis of the efficiency and impact of locally led versus top down action to address loss and damage

Action(s):

- Review best practices on locally-led loss and damage action from Vanuatu and beyond
- Hold a national forum on locally-led loss and damage action to discuss and agree on key principles
- NAB to endorse locally-led adaptation principles

Completion and Performance Metrics:

Principles on locally led loss and damage action endorsed by NAB

Funding:

3,200,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC

Policy Priority 6.2

The Government will comment to enabling action to address loss and damage that meets these principles, including by ensuring, at minimum, that national loss and damage decision-making is

- locally determined and driven
- based on equity and justice
- grounded in custom and culture
- builds on existing adaptation, DRR, humanitarian and other national response systems
- meets obligations related to human rights
- beneficial (not harmful or averse) to the items, systems and concepts locally determined by Vanuatu's people to hold value
- contains safeguards and protections for vulnerable groups and those most at-risk
- enhances complementary, coordination and coherence among governance systems at all levels
- recognizes that that responses to impacts often depends on local ecosystems and natural resources, which are themselves rapidly degrading due to climate change

Action(s):

- Develop funding proposals and loss and damage action plans that adhere to locally led loss and damage principles
- Run training and capacity building programmes with climate change implementing organisations to ensure they fully understand and able to implement the locally led loss and damage principles
- Include funding criteria of the new Loss & Damage Fund are aligned with the locally led loss and damage principles

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- At least 2 new loss and damage funding proposals explicitly reference and implement the principles
- Loss and Damage fund disperses resources to initiatives that demonstrate compliance with locally-led L&D principles

Funding:

1,000,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC

Policy Priority 7.1

Strengthen institutional and governance arrangements to address climate-induced displacement

Action(s):

- Identify a lead Ministry to act as focal point and coordinating entity for all matters relating to climate displacement, internal migration human mobility and relocation
- Establish and legislate arrangements for responding to requests from people affected by displacement, including through a coordination approach among other institutions and organisations working on climate displacement issues, in order to support both displaced individuals and host populations
- Ensure the participation of and roles for local communities, Chiefs, women's representatives, faith-based groups and vulnerable and minority groups in institutional arrangements and decision making processes.
- Strengthen Provincial and Area level coordination for implementation, acknowledging that Provincial Disaster and Climate Change Committees (PDCCCs) and Community Disaster and Climate Change Committees (CDCCCs) should take a lead role in responding to displacement concerns at the local level.
- Enhance and expand the work of the NAB taskforce on climate displacement

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- A focal point government agency is nominated by NAB and endorsed by COM as coordinating entity for all matters relating to climate displacement
- Parliament enacts legislation which mandates the roles, responsibilities and arrangements related to climate displacement, acknowledging the role of community and provincial actors as well as national stakeholders

Funding:

3,500,000
VT partial
funding |
IOM

Lead Agency:

MoCC, MoL

Policy Priority 7.5

Ensure the safety and security of all people affected by climate displacement, including migrants and host communities

Action(s):

- Ensure access to critical, essential and emergency services (police, security assistance, justice, without discrimination, gender and protection, physical planning, disaster preparedness, climate adaptation, emergency relief and social services) including for displaced populations, at-risk populations, populations returning to places of origin, populations that are integrating locally, relocated populations, internal migrants and host communities.

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Special and extraordinary policy and emergency personnel are deployed to serve climate displaced people during critical stages of relocation and migration
- gender and protection concerns are explicitly included in into physical planning and social services planning for planned relocation efforts

Funding:

15,000,000
VT partial
funding
| IOM,
FRANZ
Disaster
Agreement

Lead Agency:

MoJCS, MoIA

Policy Priority 7.7

Ensure that all people affected by climate displacement have equal access to health and medical care, nutrition advice and, where possible, psycho-social or spiritual assistance

Action(s):

- Provide awareness of and access to basic health and medical services for all people affected by climate displacement, including displaced people, people at-risk of displacement, internal migrants, people living in informal settlements, communities relocating to new locations and host communities, have continuity of access to basic health and medical services, including post-sexual assault treatment and care relating to sexual and reproductive health and chronic illness, as well as nutrition advice and information, as well as medical facilities and stocks

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- at least two communities preparing for climate relocation before 2030 are provided with additional awareness on health and medical services
- a permanent or temporary medical facility is provided to at least one community undergoing climate relocation before 2030

Funding:

80,000,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoH

Ensure access to education for all people affected by climate displacement, including climate migrants and host communities

Action(s):

- Minimise disruption to education during disasters, and avoiding the use of schools as evacuation centres for extended periods of time.
- Ensure continuity of access to education for children affected by displacement, and that relocation should not begin before access to education in new locations has been established in accordance with climate standards and building codes.
- Develop secondary and tertiary education courses on climate displacement to promote country-wide understandings of climate displacement and safe, well-managed migration

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- School services, in person or online, are specially provided to children affected by climate displacement to ensure continuity of education
- the National University of Vanuatu includes core credit content on climate-induced displacement

Funding:

80,000,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoET

Policy Priority 7.9

Ensure that all people affected by climate displacement are included in infrastructure planning and have equal access to WASH services, energy supplies, transportation, telecommunications and ICT

Action(s):

- Integrate climate displacement and internal migration considerations into existing national infrastructure planning to meet the needs of people affected by displacement in a range of scenarios
- Improve the climate and disaster-resilience of existing infrastructure in vulnerable communities as a displacement-prevention measure, focused on WASH, affordable and renewable energy, adherence to disaster-resilient building codes, roads, drainage, telecommunications, ICT.
- Provide assistance to communities returning to places of origin to restore basic infrastructure with a priority on immediate restoration of WASH, affordable and renewable energy, roads, drainage, adherence to climate and disaster resilient building codes, telecommunications, and ICT
- Ensure transportation considerations are built into relocation plans, including free or subsidised bus or boat transport to take displaced people to hospitals, nearest markets/urban centres, during the initial periods (1-2 years) after displacement
- Invest in affordable transportation options for inter-island and intra-island travel, focusing on improving a range of transportation modes, including air, maritime and road transport with Specific consideration to affordable and accessible options for climate migrants in a range of scenarios,
- Develop partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental organisations to improve access to quality infrastructure for communities affected by climate displacement

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- a multi-service assessment is undertaken prior to a community planned climate relocation, which outlines concrete strategies for maintaining WASH, affordable and renewable energy, adherence to disaster-resilient building codes, roads, drainage, telecommunications, ICT services
- at least one community relocation plan includes considerations for free or subsidised transportation for affected individuals (bus, truck, boat or air options)

Funding:

80,000,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MIPU,
MoL,
MoCC

Policy Priority 7.10

Mainstream climate displacement and migration considerations into national agricultural, fisheries, livestock and employment policies and TVET initiatives

Action(s):

- Provide timely and appropriate support to livelihoods, agricultural, fisheries and livestock activities during all stages of climate displacement
- Provide small-grant and soft loan options for people affected by climate displacement to maintain and restore livelihood activities.
- Provide access to affordable micro-insurance and “climate insurance” products that serve as additional safety nets to remedy loss of income, damage to housing, infrastructure, crops and other assets from climate impacts
- Connect people affected by climate displacement to employment services support where available and appropriate
- Connect people affected by climate displacement to technical and vocational education centres, where available and appropriate.

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- at least one climate relocated community benefits from alternative livelihood support in agriculture, fisheries, livestock or forestry
- at least one climate-focused livelihood micro insurance product is offered in the public marketplace for Vanuatu-based individuals by 2030
- subsidised TVET educational programmes are offered to victims of climate relocation to enable alternative livelihoods

Funding:

40,950,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MALFB,
MoFOMA

Policy Priority 7.11

Protect the cultural identity and spiritual resources of climate displaced individuals and communities

Action(s):

- Support the mapping of traditional knowledge, family histories, birth records, connections to land, and property and assets ownership for those affected by climate displacement.
- Facilitate community-led plans to ensure connections to ancestors and relatives buried in original locations are sustained, where this is identified as a priority by affected communities.
- Improve birth registration to ensure personal identification documentation is protected in all stages of climate displacement
- Showcase stories of climate displacement and migration including case studies of survival, return and relocation are that demonstrate community-level resilience, mobility, problem-solving and innovation in the face of adversity as well as providing places, forums and modalities to share experiences of climate displacement

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- VKS undertakes at least one full cultural assessment before a planned climate relocation, which results in the implementation of concrete actions to maintain cultural identity among displaced individuals
- MoIA to specially deploy officials to collect and maintain birth and other national registration documents in climate displaced communities
- At least 3 climate displacement stories and case studies are documented and published by the Ministry of Climate Change for use in advocacy, fundraising and the advancement of knowledge on climate mobility

Funding:

222,300,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

VCC,
VKS,
MoIA

Policy Priority 7.12

Strengthen access to justice and public participation mechanisms for people affected by climate displacement

Action(s):

- Establish complaint mechanisms, which include a right of appeal to a court or independent tribunal, for people affected by climate displacement
- Strengthen accessible and affordable legal support for people to make use of complaint mechanisms and justice systems
- Provide legal assistance or “case management” support for people making insurance claims relating to climate displacement

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- a new complaint mechanisms is launched to collect grievances from climate displaced populations
- a free or highly subsidised legal support service is offered to climate displaced individuals to pursue insurance claims or otherwise obtain justice for harm suffered

Funding:

13,450,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

SLO, OAG,
CLMO

Policy Priority 8.3

Identify thresholds and tipping points which represent intolerable risk to the social, economic and environmental systems of Vanuatu, and prioritise efforts on averting, minimising and addressing these scenarios

Action(s):

- Hold a national workshop on climate tipping points, and discuss which present the most risk to ni-Vanuatu livelihoods and social, economic and environmental systems
- Develop funding proposals and intervention strategies to implement actions that address the risks posed by tipping points

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- prioritised tipping points compiled
- At least 1 funding proposal submitted that addresses potential tipping points and extreme climate change

Funding:

117,000,000
VT no funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC

Policy Priority 9.1

The Government of Vanuatu will respect, protect and fulfill human rights obligations by adopting and enforcing laws and policies to protect people and nature against harm, injury loss and damage from adverse climate impacts

- Review and strengthen national legislation to explicitly recognize the right to a healthy environment, including protections against climate-induced displacement, biodiversity loss, and other climate loss and damage
- Review all that all national and subnational climate strategies, including adaptation, disaster and risk plans to ensure a full incorporation of human rights principles such as equity, participation, and non-discrimination.
- Expand existing social safety nets, including targeted financial assistance, food security programs, and disaster insurance schemes, to protect vulnerable populations from economic and non-economic losses.
- Establish mechanisms for affected individuals and communities to seek legal redress and compensation for climate-related damages, including through national courts and international legal avenues.
- Provide a formal space for marginalized groups, including women, youth, persons with disabilities, and Indigenous Peoples in climate policy development and governance structures
- Utilize international human rights mechanisms, such as the UN Human Rights Council and regional human rights bodies, to advocate for global recognition of climate-induced human rights violations
- Review national climate education curricula and public climate awareness campaigns to identify entry points for the integration of climate justice and human rights to build societal support for rights-based climate action.

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- revised legislation with Human Rights requirements mainstreamed
- Revised subnational plans with loss and damage and human rights mainstreams
- New mechanisms for climate-harmed individuals to seek legal redress
- Submissions on climate loss and damage to the UN Human Rights Council

Funding:

600,000 VT secured

Lead Agency:

MoJCS, MoCC, AGO



Policy Priority 9.2

Frame loss and damage narratives for advocacy around principles of justice and equity, emphasizing the disproportionate impacts on vulnerable and small island nations, and the moral responsibility of high-emission countries, acknowledging that

- historical and structural factors that have created the climate crisis and determine the extent of the unequal distribution of its effects.
- there are clear links between historic colonialism and unequal climate impacts, operating in the same way that unequal development and global inequality are directly connected to colonialism,
- globalization, unequal exchange, and entrenched forms of dependency perpetuate these inequalities.
- countries in the Global North, primarily responsible for the historic emissions that have created the climate crisis, continue to benefit from this unequal world system and are generally better equipped to deal with the effects of climate change
- Vanuatu and other countries in the Global South, already coping with significant climate adaptation needs, are increasingly facing hard limits to adaptation and are now experiencing economic and noneconomic forms of loss and damage due to climate change
- there is a need for the application of procedural, distributive, compensatory, restitutive, and corrective forms of justice
- there is a need to build compelling, evidence-based cases to garner international support, showcasing real Vanuatu examples of loss and damage
- polluter pays principles have been widely adopted and legitimised

Action(s):

- Undertake a national visioning process to refine narratives around loss and damage that are founded on climate justice principles
- Seek a Parliamentary Declaration on climate justice principles
- Undertake capacity building among climate negotiators, diplomats and officials with international duties on how to communicate climate loss and damage through a climate justice lens
- prepare submissions to UNFCCC and other international bodies that use climate justice narratives and principles to communicate Vanuatu's climate needs and ambitions
- include climate justice framing in key Vanuatu international documents including NDCs, BTRs and UPRs

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Parliament makes a Climate Justice Declaration
- Training courses delivered to negotiators and diplomats on climate justice narrative techniques and approaches
- Vanuatu documents and submissions are based on climate justice principles

Funding:

6,700,000
VT partial
funding |
STRENGTH
project

Lead Agency:

MoCC,
PMO



Policy Priority 10.1

The Government of Vanuatu must allocate increasingly more of its recurrent budget to addressing loss and damage, including by

- doubling the current allocation ceiling of 1.5% of the total amount appropriated by the Parliament for that financial year that the Council of Ministers is authorised to draw down from the Public Fund for the purposes of alleviating a declared state of emergency under section 34C of the Public Finance and Economic Management Act of 2019
- preparing climate-responsive national budgets, which actively incorporate climate change considerations, including loss and damage, into spending decisions, allocating funds specifically to address climate loss and damage initiatives, and aligning national financial planning with climate goals and addressing impacts across different sectors of the economy.
- instituting a comprehensive Climate Budget Tagging (CBT) system to fully mainstream climate change into the public financial management monitoring and oversight systems in order to monitor and track climate loss and damage-related expenditures in the national budget system, including by providing comprehensive data on climate-relevant spending that enables government to make informed decisions and prioritize climate investments, and enables transparency, accountability and maximum public scrutiny on government and donors' spending on addressing loss and damage
- include loss and damage finance as a budget policy priority in each of the upcoming annual fiscal policy guidelines and Budget Policy Statements
- including robust climate investment mandates and criteria in the Ministerial Budget Committee and Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) screening process, under the oversight of the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM), to ensure that all sectors are proactively budgeting for actions to address loss and damage

Action(s):

- Prepare a COM paper to amend section 34C of the PFM Act of 2019 to enable an increase in emergency drawdown to 3% for a response to a state of emergency from extreme events as well as for addressing slow onset impacts
- Review the current national budget, and identify entry points for climate mainstreaming, including for addressing loss and damage across sectors and at sub national levels
- prepare a COM paper to instruct Ministries on how to better integrate climate impact considerations into their budget submissions, so as to become more climate-responsive
- support a checklist for budget submission screening to ensure that they meets minimum climate responsiveness indicators
- Undertake a review of MFEM charts of accounts and identify opportunities for reform that allows climate budget tagging (CBT)
- prepare a COM paper to endorse reforms to the budget tagging process, and update smart stream systems for tracking
- Run extensive training programs with line agency finance personnel on how to appropriately use climate budget tagging tools and approaches in the new systems
- Hold an annual forum on climate finance budget priorities for the upcoming year (in line with long term climate loss and damage programmes and investment frameworks) with relevant stakeholders, under the oversight of PMO and MFEM, and submit this to the entity preparing annual fiscal policy guidelines and Budget Policy Statements for 2026 and beyond
- develop criteria for use by the Ministerial Budget Committee and Parliamentary Public Accounts Committee (PAC) screening process to ensure that all sectors are proactively budgeting for actions to address loss and damage

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- PFM Act amended to increase emergency allocation %
- All ministry budget submissions adhere to climate responsive criteria
- MFEM chart of account amended to include climate budget tags
- Annual Fiscal Policy Guidelines and Budget Policy Statements include climate loss and damage as a priority

Funding:

2,800,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MFEM,
MoCC,
PMO

Policy Priority 10.4

Revise and enhance the Disaster Risk Financing Policy 2024-2029 and associated processes to be more directly responsive to climate impacts, including loss and damage, specifically by

- Amending the stated purpose of this DRF Policy to “provide a strategic framework that enhances the country’s financial preparedness for disaster and climate impact response, recovery, and reconstruction, while also integrating proactive measures to minimize disaster impacts and address climate loss and damage”
- Include explicit references to climate loss and damage into the National Public Financial Management Improvement Roadmap 2022 – 2026.
- Ensure reforms of the Public Finance Management system to better mainstream disaster risk and climate impact financing
- Build currently used modalities, including the Catastrophe Deferred Draw-down Option (Cat-DDO) of the World Bank, into the joint disaster and climate investment frameworks
- Include climate loss and damage considerations in the Medium-Term Debt Strategy for 2023-2026, annual budget documentation, and complementary development partner-supported assessments (e.g., International Monetary Fund debt sustainability analysis).
- Mainstream climate loss and damage into the Adaptive Social Protection Policy and the Anticipatory Action Financing Policy
- Include climate loss and damage in government-wide risk management policy, internal audit and external audit methodologies
- Review financial regulations and related instructions related to emergency management and identify of necessary adjustments to clarify procedures and responsibilities relevant for climate loss and damage, including non economic impacts from slow onset events

Action(s):

- Hold a DRF Policy meeting with DGs of MFEM, PMO and MoCC to take stock of climate loss and damage inclusions and opportunities in the Policy and decide on a way forward for revision
- Assign a TA to undertake a series of deliverables in support of the climate finance working group, and the DRF taskforce to ensure that disaster and climate financing is mainstreamed in a coordinated and complementary way, including in the PFM improvement roadmap, the use of international modalities (e.g. CAT-DDO), debt strategies, annual budget documentation, development-partner assessment processes, social protection and anticipatory action financing policies, risk management and audit methodologies and financial regulations
- prepare a COM paper to endorse the reforms and revisions made to key finance processes that better incorporate climate loss and damage

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Reforms to DRF Policy and associated financial processes to mainstream climate loss and damage is endorsed by COM

Funding:

12,000,000
VT no funding

Lead Agency:

MFEM,
MoCC,
PMO

Policy Priority 10.6

Prioritise new and additional sources of highly concessional finance in the form of grants and other “risk-tolerant” finance that allows for innovation and the incubation of new responses to address loss and damage to minimise Vanuatu’s high debt burden

Action(s):

- Undertake a review of sources of highly-concessional and “risk-tolerate” finance to address climate loss and damage
- Prepare concepts and proposals to take advantage of these sources for new and additional flows

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- At least 2 new proposals/ concepts submitted to new sources of highly concessional and risk-tolerant climate finance

Funding:

6,500,000
VT partial funding
| MFAT
L&D Fund project

Lead Agency:

MFEM , MoCC

Policy Priority 10.9

Explore new and innovative delivery mechanisms to ensure financial flows are directly accessible to vulnerable people, including small grants programmes, cash transfer and vouchers, payment for risk transfer premiums, investment in adaptive social protection services

Action(s):

- Undertake a Review of delivery mechanisms and disbursement modalities for direct access to loss and damage finance by vulnerable people
- Hold a national forum on direct access modalities to prepare guidance and exchange best practices
- prepare a COM paper to endorse the use of direct access modalities in all relevant processes
- prepare and publish case studies of a diverse range of direct access disbursement modalities
- build direct access modalities into the new loss & damage Fund for Vanuatu

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Direct access modalities mandate endorsed by COM
- At least 5 case studies published on direct access modalities
- The Vanuatu L&D Fund utilises at least 3 direct access modalities in its operational procedures

Funding:

3,000,000
VT partial
funding
| MFAT
L&D Fund
project

Lead Agency:

MoCC, MFEM

Policy Priority 10.11

Implement in-kind financial investment to address loss and damage, including training, capacity building, and alternative livelihood investment

Action(s):

- Undertake a review of non-monetary policy levers to expand training, capacity and livelihood transformation in the face of climate loss and damage
- Hold a forum on non-monetary and in-kind tools to support action to address loss and damage
- prepare a COM paper to endorse implementation of the findings and recommendations

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Non monetary tools, approaches and investments are endorsed by COM for implementation G

Funding:

7,500,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC, PSC,
MoEYS



Policy Priority 10.12

Adopt national principles for climate-just financing, including that

- Climate justice sits at the heart of loss and damage finance, such that decision-makers must pay attention to how climate change impacts people differently, unevenly, and disproportionately, as well as redressing the resultant injustices in fair and equitable ways
- no affected individual should be responsible for utilising their own assets to address loss and damage, and therefore suffer further economic disadvantage
- loss and Damage finance should be direct access, new and additional, grant based, predictable and sufficient
- governments must enable a wide suite of ‘layered’ financial instruments to tackle the complexity of loss and damage risks at national and local levels, particularly ensure that the right type of finance can be delivered to the right interventions, in the right place and at the right time, in ways that are locally accessible, flexible and appropriately targeted.
- finance is delivered on the basis of solidarity, equity and justice, not as charity or relief
- funding adheres to principles of Common But Differentiated Responsibilities and Respective Capabilities (CBDR-RC) of Parties to the UNFCCC
- providers accept historical responsibility, capacity to pay, and polluter pays practices
- disbursements focus on addressing the vulnerabilities of the people who are most at risk, especially in remote, rural and under-served communities
- no strings finance that does not increase the debt burden of recipients (provided as grants not loans)
- finance should be delivered through strategic holistic long-term programmes (not projects)
- investments deliver sustainable long-term support, addressing extreme events and slow-onset processes
- finance is fair, feasible, predictable, adequate and transparent
- funds are additional to other forms of finance (such as development, adaptation, mitigation, disaster risk reduction), and must be traceable and distinguishable
- flows benefit from national ownership in decision-making and implementation
- funds are delivered in a timely manner, appropriate to climate impact response need
- approvals and disbursements are not conditional, requiring burdensome “accreditation” processes, but rather acknowledge the functional equivalency of existing systems, standards and safeguards

Action(s):

- Review climate just financing opportunities, current approaches and best practices that could be employed in Vanuatu
- Hold a national forum on climate just financing approaches and principles
- prepare a NAB proposal and COM paper that endorses the proposed climate-just financing principles

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Climate Just Financing Principles endorsed by NAB and COM

Funding:

850,000 VT
no funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC, COM,
MFEM

Policy Priority 11.1

Vanuatu should Nominate a High-Level team to champion Vanuatu’s loss and damage messages to the world, balancing science-based positions with diplomatic protocols, including by

- Seek endorsement from the Prime Minister to establish a focal point at the ministerial level to spearhead Vanuatu’s international climate diplomacy initiatives, and appoint a high-level team of Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries, Special Envoys, Consuls and Ambassadors who will take these issues forward, and act as ‘Climate Champions’ on critical priorities.
- reform the ineffective ICJ committee to become more inclusive, with wider membership, and to serve as a climate diplomacy taskforce
- clarify the various roles and responsibilities for climate diplomacy among existing institutions, primarily the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Climate Change
- strategically position Vanuatu’s presence at the United Nations in New York and Geneva to prioritise climate loss and damage issues
- invest in a new generation of “climate diplomats” by building their technical expertise and advocacy skills and equipping them to be strong, informed voices in complex climate negotiations and leadership roles

Action(s):

- Prepare a COM paper to re-establish the Climate Diplomacy Taskforce and appoint a Ministerial focal point and high-level team of international climate spokespersons and representatives to push forward Vanuatu’s ambitions, clarify the roles and responsibilities of MoFA and MoCC, and instruct Vanuatu’s embassies and high commissions to undertake specific climate diplomacy tasks
- Undertake a capacity development programme with young and talented ni-Vanuatu to become the next generation of climate negotiators, advocates and diplomats

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- COM paper on climate diplomacy revitalisation endorsed
- At least 50 ambassadors, negotiators and young leaders trained on climate approaches, strategies and ambitions

Funding:

850,000 VT
no funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC,
MoFACIET



Policy Priority 11.3

Vanuatu should engage more fully in UNFCCC Negotiating block positioning moving towards the COP31 “Pacific COP” to focus on core loss and damage priorities, including by fostering alliances with other developing and small island states, promoting shared strategies, knowledge exchange, and solidarity in advocating for loss and damage on the global stage with

- the Alliance of Small Island States AOSIS (considering Vanuatu is a founding member)
- the Least Developed Countries LDC
- the Group of Seventy Seven G77 + China developing countries
- Climate Vulnerable Forum/ V20
- The High Ambition Coalition
- The Cartagena Dialogue
- the Climate Club
- the Club of Rome
- the Loss & Damage Collaboration
- PSIDS

Action(s):

- Prepare an annual schedule of all meetings of allied groups, and ensure Vanuatu’s participation
- Assign focal points from Vanuatu to be the key point of contact for engaging in each group
- Nominate Vanuatu individuals to coordinate L&D activities and negotiations within each group
- Write papers and submissions on behalf of key crops, and/or provide comprehensive inputs into group submissions
- Engage with Australia and Turkey to ensure that COP31 is heavily focused on loss and damage issues, with tangible outcomes for loss and damage finance

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Vanuatu individuals are group coordinators for loss and damage
- Vanuatu makes L&D submissions within constituent groups
- COP31 is known as the Pacific loss and damage COP

Funding:

15,000,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC,
MoFAICET



Policy Priority 11.4

Vanuatu should prepare well in advance and consistently send strong negotiating teams to UNFCCC events, including

- June Intergovernmental meetings in Bonn
- Seek seats on Working Groups/Committees (adaptation committee, WIM exec committee etc.)
- Pre-COPs
- COPs, including preparation of high impact side events
- ensuring that the voices of Vanuatu's indigenous communities, women, youth, and people with disabilities are represented in international forums to underscore the multifaceted nature of climate impacts.
- proactively making formal submissions in response to open calls relevant to loss and damage
- maintaining a representative group of national Loss & Damage Contact Points

Action(s):

- Recruit a UNFCCC lead negotiator to guide future COP engagements
- Re-invigorate the UNFCCC taskforce of the NAB with a new coordinator and TA
- Develop a list of permanent negotiators to attend all key events, and engage intersessionally in key thematic areas
- Prepare and regularly update the list of open calls for submissions to UNFCCC SBs, and ensure completion on time
- Annually update Vanuatu's Loss and Damage contact points, ensuring a balance of government and non-government representatives appointed by the loss and damage working group

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- UNFCCC lead negotiator recruited
- Permanent thematic negotiators endorsed by NAB
- Vanuatu makes at least 1 loss and damage relevant submission to UNFCCC each year

Funding:

18,500,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC

Policy Priority 11.7

Vanuatu should take the lead in regional climate change actions/dialogues/events, and engage fully in regional climate change programmes, taking full advantage of expertise within the Pacific's CROP+ grouping

Action(s):

- Review opportunities to bring loss and damage ambition into the Pacific Leaders Meeting outcome communiqué for the upcoming year
- Prepare a series of meetings, events and advocacy campaigns in various Ministerial meetings leading up to the leaders meeting to ensure high-ambition language is agreed in advance and makes it into the outcome statement
- Vanuatu should self-nominate to become a Pacific Champion for Loss and Damage or other relevant theme
- Vanuatu technical officials should self-nominate to lead on loss and damage thematic negotiation areas

Completion and Performance Metrics:

- Pacific Leaders communiqué includes Vanuatu ambition on loss and damage action
- Vanuatu holds the role of Pacific Loss & Damage Ministerial Champion
- A Vanuatu official is the lead negotiator for PSIDS loss and damage

Funding:

20,000,000
VT no
funding

Lead Agency:

MoCC

07

APPENDICES



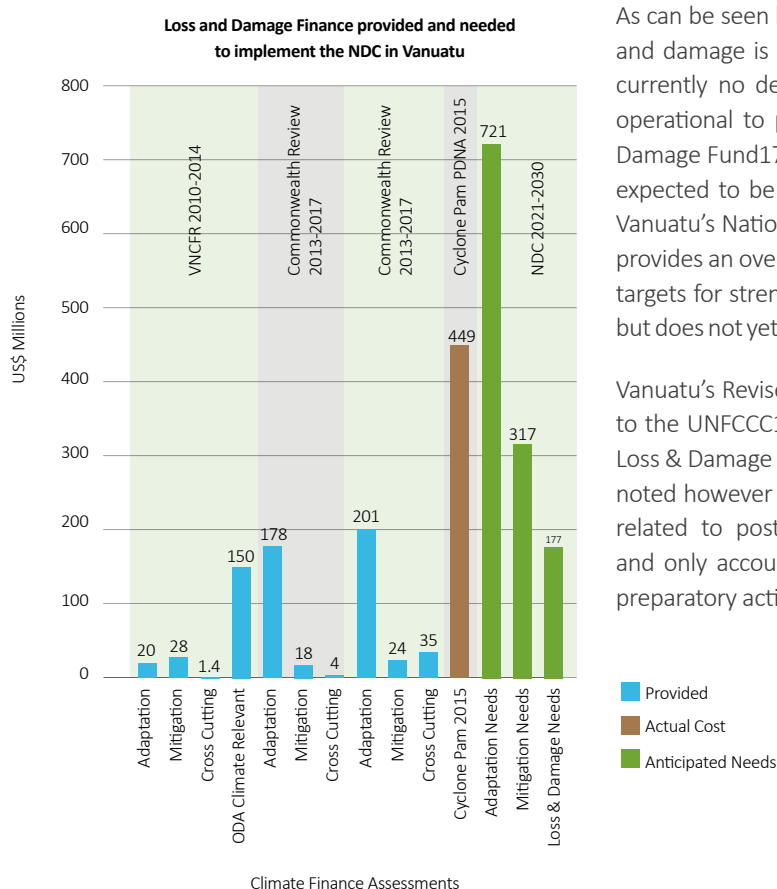


Finance, Technology and Capacity Gaps and Needs related to Loss & Damage

According to Vanuatu's National Climate Finance Review and Vanuatu's draft Nationally Designated Authority NDA Project Development Handbook, from 2010-2014 an estimated US\$ 50 million in grant finance was allocated to Vanuatu with an additional US\$ 150 million allocated through ODA that included climate change as a "significant" but not primary objective. Of the US\$ 50 million in grants to Vanuatu for climate change, US\$ 28 million (57%) was for mitigation, US\$ 20 million (40%) was for adaptation, and US\$ 1.4 million (3%) was for cross-cutting projects.

From 2013-2017, an estimated US\$ 200 million was committed for climate investments in Vanuatu, with US\$ 178 million (89%) for adaptation, US\$ 18 million (9%) for mitigation, and US\$ 4 million (2%) for cross-cutting projects. Most of this climate finance (56%) went towards infrastructure-related investments post-Cyclone Pam (e.g., climate proofing of major roads and wharfs), environment (27%) (e.g., agriculture, water, biodiversity, conservation), and energy (8%). Multilateral channels accounted for most of the finance (63%), nearly double what bilateral channels provided (37%). Instruments utilised were primarily concessional loans with some grants and technical support.

The Commonwealth Secretariat's Assessment of Vulnerable Sectors in Vanuatu estimated figures of climate finance received between 2016- 2018 of US\$ 259 million, with US\$ 201 million (77%) for adaptation, US\$ 24 million (9%) for mitigation, and US\$ 35million (14%) for cross-cutting projects. They found that Multilateral channels (e.g., GEF, LDCF, WB, EDF) accounted for most of the finance provided, followed by bilateral channels (e.g. Australia, New Zealand, France, Canada).



As can be seen by all the analyses undertaken to date, finance for loss and damage is not yet adequately resourced and tracked as there is currently no dedicated national, bilateral, or multilateral facility yet operational to provide support. Neither the new UNFCCC Loss and Damage Fund¹⁷² or the Santiago Network on Loss & Damage¹⁷³ are expected to be fully operational or financed before 2025. Similarly, Vanuatu's National Climate Finance Road Map (CFRM) 2021-2025¹⁷⁴ provides an overview of the country's short to medium-term goals and targets for strengthening access and management of climate finance, but does not yet fully incorporate Loss and Damage financing strategies.

Vanuatu's Revised and Enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution to the UNFCCC¹⁷⁵ calculated the costs of meeting its 12 conditional Loss & Damage targets at US\$177.7 million through 2030. It should be noted however that this cost estimate does not include any expenses related to post-event recovery, relocation, capacity or technology and only accounts for the most urgent institutional, procedural and preparatory activities related to addressing loss and damage.

¹⁷² <https://unfccc.int/loss-and-damage-fund-joint-interim-secretariat>

¹⁷³ <https://unfccc.int/santiago-network>

¹⁷⁴ https://drive.google.com/file/d/1NotFn-7N8YLuimsf5xa9se4Y22K_P-XZ/view

¹⁷⁵ <https://unfccc.int/documents/578782>

Estimated Loss & Damage Financial Needs 2025-2035

The following table seeks to provide a more realistic estimation of anticipated needs to address loss and damage from 2025-2030:

Vanuatu L&D Anticipated Financial Needs 2025-2030	USD
Anticipated Nationally Determined Contribution NDC L&D Needs	180,000,000
Anticipated Humanitarian, Disaster Response and Recovery Needs	2,500,000,000
Anticipated Needs to Address Non Economic Impacts in Situ	350,000,000
Anticipated Needs to Address Slow Onset Impacts In Situ	430,000,000
Anticipated Relocation/Retreat Finance Needs	780,000,000
Anticipated Needs to Address L&D Capacity Gaps	150,000,000
Anticipated Needs to Address L&D Technology Gaps	225,000,000
TOTAL USD	4,615,000,000

Technology Gaps and Needs

According to Vanuatu's Technology Needs Assessment¹⁷⁶ there are a range of technologies that will support ni-Vanuatu communities address loss and damage, including in the following sectors;

Agriculture

Emphasis was given to technologies with the potential to contribute to address the impacts of extreme events, prolonged dry periods and salinization. The TNA prioritises technology according to cost implications, and whether implementing a particular technology will contribute to adaptation, broad development and/or sector development objectives such as poverty reduction and gender mainstreaming.

Two of the top technologies priorities relevant to addressing loss and damage included;

- Crop diversification and new varieties: a technology that entails the introduction of new cultivated species and improved varieties of crop, to address and respond to impacts including water and heat stress, water salinity, emergence of new pests and extreme events such as cyclones.
- Farmer Field Schools: to strengthen the understanding of farmers about the ecological and climate processes that have affected the production of their crops and animals, through conducting field learning exercises such as field observations. Importantly FFS provide a platform for farmers to discuss and share knowledge related to addressing loss and damage in the agricultural context.

Water Security

- Water Safety Plans: described collectively as a systematic and integrated approach to water supply management based on assessment and control of various factors that have damaged the safety of drinking water. The WSP approach allows for water suppliers to be flexible and responsive to changed input parameters
- Flood Hazard Mapping: an exercise to define those coastal areas which are at risk of flooding under extreme conditions. As such, its primary objective is to anticipate and put in place response measures to address the impact of coastal flooding.

¹⁷⁶ <https://tech-action.unepccc.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/2/2020/09/tna-adaptation-vanuatu.pdf>

The technology provides benefits for risk informed development planning, emergency management/response and raising awareness for flood hazard solutions.

Other technologies will be critical to enable Vanuatu's effort to address climate loss and damage, requiring targeted technology solutions that enhance resilience, disaster response, and recovery. The following technology gaps would need to fully align with community needs, respect indigenous knowledge, and foster local ownership for sustainable implementation.

- **Enhanced Multi Hazard Early Warning Systems:** Advanced systems for monitoring and disseminating alerts for cyclones, floods, and atmospheric conditions to minimize risks to life and property.
- **Climate-Resilient Infrastructure Technology:** Innovative materials and construction methods to rebuild create housing and public infrastructure that was lost or damaged due to extreme weather events and sea-level rise.
- **Remote Sensing and Mapping Tools:** Use of satellite imagery and drones for damage assessment, land-use planning, and risk mapping in vulnerable areas.
- **Water Management Technology:** Sustainable solutions including desalination units, and water purification to address prolonged droughts and contaminated water sources.
- **Renewable Energy Solutions:** Solar, wind, and micro-hydro systems to provide energy independence and resilience during and after climate impacts occur.
- **Data Management Platforms:** Systems to collect, store, and analyse climate and disaster-related data to inform policies and prioritize interventions.
- **Habitat Rehabilitation:** Deployment of coral reef restoration technologies and wave break structures to mitigate storm surge and coastal erosion.
- **Disaster-Resilient Communication Networks:** Satellite-based and decentralized communication systems to ensure connectivity throughout climate emergencies.
- **Community-Focused Information Apps:** Mobile platforms that provide localized loss and damage education, resource-sharing, and real-time response coordination.



Capacity Gaps and Needs

While climate capacity has increased exponentially from 2010, there is a marked gap in knowledge, skills and capacities related to addressing loss and damage, largely due to the novel emergence of Loss & Damage as a stand-alone concept, and also due to the increasing severity and frequency of climate impacts.

The Vanuatu government has developed a Climate Change Strategy for the Ministry of Education and Training Skills Centres¹⁷⁷ in order to support mainstreaming climate change management into skills development activities in Vanuatu's technical and vocational education and training sector.

The Government of Vanuatu with support from the Australia Pacific Climate Partnership developed a report¹⁷⁸ on skills required to support a national and regional climate action workforce in the country, finding that "Vanuatu is experiencing an entrenched skills shortage in disciplines related to climate change. A range of factors impact on the capacity of qualified ni-Vanuatu workers to access climate change-related employment opportunities locally and regionally. This is despite considerable national and foreign investment in climate change training programs and related activities throughout the country."

The report suggested the following capacity recommendations relevant to loss and damage skills development;

- Integrate climate change-related content into all vocational training and assessment delivery, and primary, secondary and tertiary curricula.
- Strengthen the supply of climate skills with locally contextualised knowledge.
- Support the establishment of a national training centre of excellence for climate resilient technologies.
- Strengthen climate response leadership capacity for senior government officials at national and provincial levels.
- Strengthen delivery of scholarships (TVET, undergraduate, postgraduate) targeting skills for climate jobs.
- Support increased involvement of productive sector enterprises in climate response initiatives through skills, training and business development.

The key skills gaps included:

- Built Environment and Infrastructure, including construction and property services (including all aspects of commercial, civil and infrastructure construction), water and energy services, and transport and logistics (including maritime, road and air transport).
- Water, including the safe supply of water in the context of extreme weather and slow onset events
- Land Use and Coastal Protection- where there is an overwhelming convergence of climate, social and economic threats and hazards
- Energy – particularly related to renewable energy which is used in all aspects of addressing loss and damage
- Transport- including transport infrastructure (road, aviation and shipping) to ensure it is able to continue to meet the social and economic aspirations of the nation even during and after climate impacts
- Agriculture- already constrained by a combination of increasing frequency of extreme weather events, poor farming practices, and lack of land use planning
- Fisheries- related to damages to aquaculture facilities and fishing infrastructure
- Forestry- as there are documented "institutional weaknesses" hampering the availability and retention of adequate and qualified staff
- Tourism and Hospitality- in how to maintain economic activity after climate impacts
- Business and Finance- to improve knowledge and use of financial instruments, including insurance and cash transfer
- Administration and Communication- including for climate response projects requiring administrative skills across a range of areas such as communications technology, video conferencing, and electronic filing and data management, English proficiency (written and oral) and competence with information technology applications

177 <http://www.vanuatutvet.org.vu/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Climate-Change-Strategy.pdf>

178 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1M3eNicksvngvcrx4wbPdMI7w8nfuBn95/edit>

- Traditional Knowledge and Cross-cultural Competence- as traditional or kastom knowledge can be used to help communities and businesses understand and relate to climate impacts as well as to traditional practices (e.g. local agricultural practices and food production).
- Information Management- Given the multi-sectoral nature of climate response, the importance of sharing data and information is critical. Technical data collection and analysis using different types of information management systems (e.g., spatial data management and geological measuring systems) underpin loss and damage work.

The following table identifies providers of relevant climate loss and damage skills in Vanuatu

Provider	Climate Skills-related Delivery
Pacific Vocational Training Centre (Port Vila)	Certificate courses in engineering and information communications technology sector
Rural and remote PSET Providers	Certificate courses in business, construction, engineering, information communications, tourism and hospitality Non-formal short courses
Vanuatu Agriculture College ³³	Certificate courses in agriculture, forestry, horticulture and livestock
Vanuatu Institute of Technology (VIT)	Certificate courses in business, construction, climate change and disaster risk reduction, engineering, information communications, tourism and hospitality Non-formal short courses
Vanuatu National University	Bachelor and Master qualifications in economics, environment, social sciences, geography and town planning
University of the South Pacific (USP) ³⁴	Diploma, bachelor and postgraduate programs in agriculture, geography, environment, ocean and natural sciences
Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (USP) ³⁵	Diploma and postgraduate programs in climate change
Pacific TAFE (USP) ³⁶	Certificate programs in coastal fisheries and aquaculture compliance, community development, project management and resilience (climate change and disaster risk reduction)
USP Vanuatu Campus	Online and face-to-face studies in certificate, bachelor, postgraduate courses
Australia Awards	Australia Award Scholarships and Australia Award Pacific Scholarships Australia for technical, bachelor and postgraduate study at regional and Australian tertiary institutions
Australia Pacific Training	Trades and technology certificates in built environment, business, community services, education, engineering and hospitality and tourism
Coalition ³⁷	Micro-credentials in business, information technology, personal services, business, tourism and hospitality

Provider	Climate Skills-related Delivery
Other climate skills suppliers	World Vision Vanuatu: Inclusive water sanitation and hygiene, sustainable livelihoods and market linkages
	Care International Vanuatu: disaster risk reduction, climate change adaptation and food and livelihood security
	Live and Learn: environmental protection, disaster risk reduction and response, water sanitation and hygiene
	USAID: Climate Ready 'project preparation' short course

A report developed by the EU-PacTVET program on Vanuatu Training Needs and Gaps¹⁷⁹ identified the following skills gap areas to address climate loss and damage;

- Energy Efficient building designing and construction skills
- Solar PV systems, Hydropower and Wind O&M skills
- Building Construction Design Skills
- Food security and Recovery (Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries Livestock)
- Aquaculture design and relocation management knowledge skills.
- Water security
- Weather Patterns & Climate Variability Analysis
- Soil and Nutrition Analysis
- Food Handling, Processing and Preservation
- Traditional Knowledge and social analysis

More general, transferrable and functional skill gaps for addressing loss and damage include:

- Communication
- Research Analysis and Reporting
- Public Speaking
- Planning, Organization, Administration and Management
- Creative and Innovative skills
- Coaching, Listening & Mentoring skills

¹⁷⁹ https://prdrse4all.spc.int/sites/default/files/vanuatu_0.pdf

Research Priorities for Loss and Damage Investigation in Vanuatu

Loss and Damage research is essential for developing science-based policies that accurately reflect the realities of climate impacts in Vanuatu. As climate change intensifies, evidence-based decision-making ensures that policies are not only reactive but also proactive in addressing both economic and non-economic losses. Robust evidence gathering and research provides the data necessary to quantify losses, track trends, and develop targeted interventions that enhance resilience. Without strong scientific foundations, policies risk being disconnected from on-the-ground realities, leading to ineffective or misdirected efforts. Therefore, Vanuatu seeks investment in loss and damage research in order to strengthen governance, improve risk assessment, and enhance the ability of decision-makers to advocate for Vanuatu's needs in international climate negotiations.

Indigenous researchers, local students, and national academic institutions play a crucial role in ensuring that L&D research is grounded in the lived experiences of ni-Vanuatu communities. Indigenous knowledge systems offer centuries of observations and climate-responsive practices that complement Western scientific research, particularly in understanding slow-onset events like sea-level rise and changing rainfall patterns. By integrating Indigenous methodologies with contemporary climate science, researchers can produce more holistic insights into climate impacts and response strategies. Supporting local students' participation in research not only builds national capacity but also ensures that future climate leaders have the skills to support robust measures to avert, minimise and address loss and damage.

Strengthening national academic institutions, such as the National University of Vanuatu, is key to making L&D research a sustained and impactful effort. National research centers in Vanuatu must be supported with funding, technical expertise, and international partnerships to develop cutting-edge climate science and policy recommendations. Collaboration between local researchers and government agencies ensures that scientific findings directly inform policy development, while partnerships with international institutions provide access to advanced methodologies and funding opportunities. By prioritizing home-grown research programmes, Vanuatu can ensure that its loss and damage policies are driven by local realities, culturally appropriate solutions, and a long-term vision for resilience and justice.

Key Vanuatu Loss & Damage Research Needs and Priorities:

- Quantifying Economic and Non-Economic Losses – Assess the direct and indirect costs of climate-related events, including cultural, psychological, biodiversity, health and social impacts
- Slow-Onset vs. Extreme Events – Compare how different types of climate hazards (e.g., sea-level rise vs. cyclones) impact communities, ecosystems, and infrastructure, and require novel solutions and strategies to address diverse impacts
- Mapping Vulnerable Communities – Identify geographic and socio-economic hotspots for loss and damage impacts to prioritize response strategies, including actions that involve transforming livelihoods or relocation
- Assessing Long-Term Loss and Damage Needs- evaluate -term Loss and Damage (L&D) needs by identifying projected climate impacts, cumulative socio-economic losses, and necessary policy, financial, and institutional responses, and explore the evolving needs of affected communities, including livelihood transitions, cultural preservation, and intergenerational equity.
- Traditional Knowledge & Cultural Approaches – Document and identify strategies to utilise indigenous and local knowledge systems for addressing loss and damage and their effectiveness and impact in diverse geographical, cultural and socio-economic contexts
- Legal and Policy Frameworks – Analyse gaps in national policies and subnational plans, including at the Provincial, Area Council and community level, which may benefit from additional elements of loss and damage action, and identify enhanced, novel or innovative policy levers, governance mechanisms, or regulatory improvements.
- Climate-Displaced Populations – Investigate internal and external climate migration patterns, legal protections, and long-term impacts on ni-Vanuatu communities, including strategies that ensure dignified and community-led responses
- Loss and Damage Finance – Evaluate loss and damage finance flows, sources, modalities for enhanced access and barriers to mobilising sufficient loss and damage funds and propose mechanisms to improve the mobilisation, provision and utilisation at all levels

- Loss and Damage Data Systems – Contribute to and enhance national databases for tracking climate-related losses and response effectiveness.
- Gender-Differentiated Impacts – Explore how climate impacts disproportionately affect women, girls and others marginalized communities, and investigate mechanisms to enhance equity and inclusion in responses to loss and damage
- Human Rights and Climate Change – Investigate how climate change threatens fundamental human rights, including the right to life, food, water, health, and self-determination, and assess legal and policy mechanisms to protect vulnerable communities from climate-induced injustices.
- Limits to Adaptation – Study how climate change forces shifts in employment, economic activities, and social safety nets, and may breach hard and soft limits to adaptation
- International L&D Diplomacy – Examine how small island developing states like Vanuatu can enhance their diplomatic strategies to influence global climate negotiations, secure financial commitments, and strengthen international cooperation on Loss and Damage.
- Tipping Points and Extreme Change – Investigate the potential for climate-induced tipping points in Vanuatu, such as ecosystem collapse, freshwater depletion, or irreversible coastal erosion, and assess their socio-economic and cultural implications for long term survival, as well as response options





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